RETHINKING PLATO AND PLATONISM

BY

C.J. DE VOGEL

Vermeulen

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C.J. DE VOGEL

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AND PLATONISM

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C.J. de Vogel was *ordinarius* for Ancient and Medieval Philosophy, Utrecht University, 1947-1968, and *ordinarius* for Ancient Philosophy, including Early Christian Thought, Utrecht University, 1968-1974

After a life of great scholarly productivity, the author of this book died on April 7th 1986. Even while she was correcting the proofs, her vital forces slowly faded away. A month before her death I visited her at Renesse. On that occasion she entrusted to me the final preparations for the publication of this work. I have fulfilled this task with feelings of piety towards a woman, who was such an impressive searcher after truth and goodness, and who was so personally present in whatever she wrote.

J. C. M. van Winden

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PREFACE

Early in 1970 my volume *Philosophia, Part I, Studies in Greek Philosophy* appeared at Van Gorcum's, Assen[1]. As a matter, of fact the title should have been ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ, written in Greek, which somehow brings us nearer to the subject-matter with which the work is concerned. It opens with a chapter that inquires into the meaning the word φιλοσοφία had in the Greek speaking world throughout its long cultural history, next deals elaborately with the Philolaus texts and a few other Pythagorean problems, gives a few chapters on Socrates and a number of others who deal with Plato and problems of the history of Platonism, including one chapter on Plotinus. He is introduced as rather a monistic thinker. In the Preface I said that I intended to have it followed by a second Part, which would have to deal with the encounter of Greek and Christian thought, both in later Antiquity and in the Middle Ages. That would have been possible. However, in the years after the appearance of Part I I have been constantly occupied with new work, mostly in the field of Plato and the history of Platonism.

Early in the year 1972 the then Archbishop of Utrecht asked me for a documented explanation of my views on the present day's situation in the Church, a matter on which I had been silent up to that moment. After a provisory reply, I found myself confronted with the task of going to the bottom of those problems, a task I simply had to take upon me. Of course one cannot do so and continue living in peace. My book on the actual Church problems appeared towards the end of 1977, after which I took up my habitual studies without delay.

Though the years thereafter were by no means undisturbed, I have constantly been concerned with that which seemed to me another really urgent problem: defining correctly what is the place of Plato in philosophic thought; next, defining what on good grounds may be called "Platonism", and what cannot fall under that denomination. With these problems, I think, we find ourselves involved in another great struggle. It is one of an intellectual nature, yet has a bearing on the fundamental principles of human life. And is it not, for that reason most of all, a fight worth fighting?

I am aware that I am not the only one to see these problems in this way. Gadamer saw them in a simular light, when in reviewing Findlay's Plato of 1974 he wrote that this book appeared at the right moment: for it

[1] (Philosophical Texts and Studies, University Utrecht, 19).

was now the time to come to a true assessment of the value of the Tübingen-Heidelberg Plato studies of the preceding thirty years. And at the moment I am writing this Preface to an edition of a few chapters on Plato and Platonism written in the years 1978-83, I am finding that in the same years a few Italian scholars known to me in particular from studies in Aristotle, have been concerned with the same problems. I think the coincidence testifies to the importance, and even to the urgency of the case.

My scope in the present work is a simple one, though the way one has to go is long and complicated. "Who was Plato, the philosopher?" That is the question one has to ask. It has been answered in different ways, and that is why, after having been concerned with it for many years, one has to go back about half a century, and give a critical account of the history one took part in. I think neither apology nor explanation is needed. Some better insight might result from these reflections. And that is enough.

The chapters on Findlay's and Guthrie's Plato are the immediate continuation of ch. I. These two English authors are persons of a very different character, and their approaches to Plato differ accordingly. Findlay in principle shares the Tübingen views, be it in a highly personal way; Guthrie, though not entirely rejecting the testimony of others on what Plato taught in his school, had his strong reservations about the matter. Either of these English authors, however, did important work.

One name is hardly mentioned in these few chapters: Harold Cherniss. This fact might create a false impression, and therefore needs a word of explanation. I have been at variance with Cherniss in his radical rejection of the *agrapha*[2], and in some respects at least he has been at variance with me about my "turning-point"—thesis (1936)[3]. However, though I *do* think the *Parmenides* marks a real crisis in Plato's thought, I fully recognize that Plato did not abandon his theory of transcendent Forms, as appears quite clearly in a well-known passage of the *Timaeus*, and may be found in other dialogues of the later period as well. I described Plato's change of mind as a new orientation, a fruit of maturity of the mind, in the same way as later Guthrie and Fr. Solmsen had to state a noticeable change in Plato's interest in the later part of his works. This has been my conviction as early as the "Keerpunt" work, at least in principle. It may have grown in clarity and depth. Anyway, I found myself on Cherniss' side when he rejected G. E. L. Owen's early dating

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[2] In *Mnemos.* 1949.

[3] In *Amer. Journ. of Philol.* LIX (1938), 236-240, in my opinion a very fine and instructive article.

of the *Timaeus*, and greatly enjoyed his argument on the relation of the *Timaeus* to Plato's later dialogues (1957)[4]. On the whole I think I am not that far from Cherniss' view of Plato. His recent study on Lafrance's work on "Doxa" served for me as a kind of test[5].

After all, there might be more of consensus about Plato-interpretation among scholars than there seems to be at first glance.

My chapter IV deals with a few Italian reactions to J. H. Krämer's "Plato". Here the Neoplatonic developments are directly involved.

Ch. V considers Plotinus' treatise V 1, on The Three Fundamental Hypostases, and says a word about the problem of Platonism and Christianity connected with it, on a very English side.

The same problems have been the perpetual concern of the late German professor Heinrich Dörrie, whose approach was quite different. His research started from the study of Platonism in the first century B.C., and stretched to the 4th century A.D. It led him to construe a complete antithesis between Platonism and Christianity. Two aspects of this vast field of studies have to be distinguished: (1) the description of the different forms of Platonism in the period concerned, (2) the problem of a certain affinity between Platonic and Christian thought, and at the same time an essential difference between the one and the other. I took up the discussion with this dear friend and colleague as soon as a Festschrift for his 70th birthday was prepared. In that volume I dealt with the first mentioned topic[6], leaving the other one for a separate treatment, originally planned as a part of the present volume. However, since there has been a certain delay in the publication of these studies, due to merely practical circumstances, I preferred to give that essay, entitled "Platonism and Christianity: a mere antagonism, or a profound common ground?" to the journal *Vigiliae Christianae*, in which it appeared in March 1985[7].

My critical reflections suppose, and more or less contain, a Plato-interpretation which was expounded in earlier works. There are, however, some aspects of Plato's philosophy that are particularly actual, and should be argued in full. This was done in a concise, yet rather

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[4] In: R. E. Allen (ed.), *Studies in Plato's Metaphysic*, London 1965, ^{3}1968, 339-378.

[5] In: Dialogue XXII (1983), 137-162. On p. 152 the text reads: "As to knowledge in its true meaning for Plato himself, sensation has been shown to have no part in it" (*Theaet.* 186e2-8)". To the last part of the sentence I noted down: "*in a sense*! But it is presupposed (sc. as a condition)."—In 1938 Cherniss opposed my opinion that, after the *Phaedo*, the *Theaet.* passage marked a new development. I think it does.

[6] "Der sog. Mittelplatonismus, überwiegend eine Philosophie der Diesseitigkeit?" in H.-D. Blume und Fr. Mann (ed.), *Platonismus und Christentum* (*Jb. f. Antike u. Chr.*, Erg. bd. 10), Münster i.W. 1983, 277-302.

[7] Vol. 39, 1-62.

complete form in the essay "Was Plato a dualist?" (1972), which nevertheless has to be supplemented at a few points, and chiefly at the end. Two other studies, "Plotinus' Image of Man; its relation to Plato and later Neoplatonists" (1976) and "The Sōma-Sêma theory" (1981), complete the argument on Plato's doctrine of man, given in the essay of 1972. For the reader, it is almost indispensable to have these studies at his disposal. Therefore, I have them reproduced in the chapters VI-VIII of this volume, revised and completed where needed. Thus I may hope that my critical reflections will be of some use for Plato-readers and -lovers.

Renesse, July 1984 C. J. DE V.

PART ONE

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

CHAPTER ONE

PLATO

THE WRITTEN AND UNWRITTEN DOCTRINES

Fifty years of Plato studies, 1930-1980.

Guthrie had hardly finished writing his fourth volume of the Cambridge History of Greek Philosophy dealing with Plato's earlier work, when under the above-mentioned title a book appeared, which could be expected to offer a very different approach to Plato. The author, J. N. Findlay, after studying Plato, has passed through Hegel and Husserl. He made a long career in teaching philosophy and, when expounding his ideas about Plato in a volume that appeared in 1974, he can declare it to be the final expression of a set of convictions which, born in his mind in the years 1926-27, are brought out after having been meditated on during half a century.

In his student years Findlay might have found some inspiration in the then fairly recent work of John Burnet, *Greek Philosophy* I, *Thales to Plato*[1], almost half of which is concerned with Plato.

John Burnet's view of Plato

In Burnet's opinion, nothing was as important in Plato's life as the foundation of the Academy. We must always remember, so he says, that Plato's "real" teaching was done within the circle of his School, and that even his later dialogues contain only what he thought fit to give to a wider public, just to define his attitude to other schools of philosophy. (B. was thinking here in particular of the "humanist" education of Isocrates). Burnet was fully aware of the problem of the *agrapha*: In passing from Plato to Aristotle, we have the impression of passing to a different world altogether. To a large extent the difficulty we feel is due to the fact that, of Plato, we have the literary work but not his lectures, while of Aristotle we do not, except in fragments, have the published works. "If we only had Plato's lecture on *The Good*, and the *Protreptikos* of Aristotle, we would get a very different impression. As it is, we may fairly assume that Plato's lectures had far more resemblance to Aristotle's than to his own dialogues"[2]. Similar things were said by

[1] First edition London 1914; reprinted 1920, and for the 7th time 1950.
[2] Burnet, *Gr. Philos.* I, 214-5.

Werner Jaeger in his *Aristoteles*, the first edition of which appeared in German, Berlin 1923.

Some forty years later the continuity between Plato's *Peri tagathou* and Aristotle's *Protrept.* will be brought out by H. J. Krämer[3]. He will find the leading principles of *Peri tagathou* not in the *Protrept.* only, but in the doctrine of the *Hen* as well. Moreover, Aristotle's early logical works, the *Topics* and the *Categories*, as well as the books B, Γ, Δ and I of the *Metaphysics* testify to the continuity. In this Krämer could follow the lead of Werner Jaeger in his earlier studies on the genesis of Ar.'s *Metaph.*[4], a lead which proved to be both inspiring and open to criticism, in the years after the middle of this century.

I go back to Burnet for a moment. He did not think there was a great deal of Plato's philosophy in the Socratic dialogues: he rather looked at them as a highly dramatic picture of a past generation. It is not before the *Republic* that he could find *something* at least of Plato's own thought in it. But in the later dialogues, no doubt, we have to do with Plato. The crisis position of the *Parmenides* is keenly noticed by Burnet. He gives a penetrating account of the later dialogues, deals in one and the same chapter with *The Statesman* and *The Laws*, and declares that in both these works Plato took an extremely practical view of political questions, to which he adds the noticeable remark: "and he was able to do so without abating one jot of his idealism"[5].

Burnet had a clear view of the function of the Academy in providing assistance to several states for framing their constitutions. "The purpose of the *Laws* is, therefore, an eminently practical one, and the work is designed to meet a real need of the time"[6]. A generation later Burnet's understanding of the character of Plato's last great work will be splendidly confirmed by the thorough investigation of Glenn R. Morrow[7].

Burnet thought it by no means easy to grasp the central doctrine of Plato's philosophy. "He did not choose to commit it to writing", so he says[8], referring to Plato, *Second Epistle* 314c, and goes on: "and we are almost entirely dependent on what Aristotle tells us. What makes matters worse is that Aristotle is a very unsympathetic critic of Plato's teaching....".

[3] *Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles.* Zum Wesen und zur Geschichte der platonischen Ontologie. Heidelberg 1959; repr. Amsterdam 1967. (Further cited as *APA*).
[4] *Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Metaphysik des Aristoteles*, Berlin 1912.
[5] Burnet, *o.c.*, 294.
[6] Burnet, *o.c.*, 303.
[7] *Plato's Cretan City.* A historical interpretation of the Laws. Princeton N.J. 1960.
[8] Burnet, *o.c.*, 312, referring back to 212.

None the less, Burnet is willing to make a cautious use of Aristotle's testimony. "When he tells us, for instance, that Plato held numbers to be unaddible, we are bound to believe him." And Burnet is not at all inclined to consider the "theory of Numbers" to have been no more than a senile aberration (which seems to have been Zeller's view, then shared by the great majority of Plato scholars). Thus, he thinks, Plato's philosophy must have been a philosophy which identified "forms" with numbers. Moreover, it was a philosophy which, like early Pythagoreanism, admitted the One and the Indefinite as the "elements" both of Numbers and of all things.

Burnet keeps close to the *Philebus.* But he does not read it without referring to the ἕν and ἀόριστος δυάς or the "Great-and-Small" of Aristotle's account of Plato's doctrine in *Metaph.* A 6, of which he finds a further explanation in Hermodorus' fragment ap. Simpl. *in Phys.* 247.30.ff.

Now Burnet was certainly wrong in that he simply identified the Socrates of Plato's dialogues with the historic Socrates, and thus came to consider the theory of transcendent Forms as a genuine piece of Socratic, not of Platonic, philosophy. In Aristotle's brief account in *Metaph.* A 6 he might have found a clear indication to distinguish where in a dialogue such as the *Phaedo* it is Plato who in the person of his Socrates begins to expound his own way of philosophizing. Aristotle's account could have led him to a fuller view of Plato's thought. Anyhow, one cannot say that in the English scholarly world of Findlay's student years the stimulus for taking the problem of the *agrapha* seriously would have been altogether lacking.

A. E. Taylor

A. E. Taylor's book *Plato, The man and his work* appeared first at the end of October 1926 and was soon followed by a second edition (1927). Taylor shared Burnet's opinions in many respects. On the whole, he looked at the *agrapha*-problem in the same way, that is to say, as a problem which could not be ignored. In his final chapter he offered an interpretation of Aristotle's account, to which he had devoted a separate study, published in *Mind* about the same time[9].

A changed climate?

When after a long period of maturation Findlay came to write his "Plato", he was encouraged, so he says, by the fact that "the scholarly

[9] "Forms and Numbers", referred to by Taylor, *Plato*, 516 n. 2.

climate had changed", in particular "on the continent", after the publication of works by Krämer, Gaiser and others. Now let us remark that "on the continent" the Tübingen Plato interpretation is by no means as generally accepted as Findlay seems to suppose. On the contrary, it is rather limited to a restricted circle. I think we do not go astray when supposing that, on the whole, for classical philologists (who are, after all, the people that read Plato) this philosopher is still essentially the Plato of the dialogues. Though they know about the *agrapha*, Aristotle's testimony does not achieve for them an actually prevailing significance. The more they are Plato readers, the stronger they have their misgivings about any "system of philosophy", reconstructed on the basis of Aristotle's notes and attributed to Plato. So it is in my own country, and I am sure we are not taking an isolated position in this matter. I am finding the same elsewhere, even in Germany.

It is precisely for this reason that Prof. Findlay's work gets for us a particular interest. Speaking for myself I must say the following.

My Plato book of 1936

Since the end of 1925, when I first read and wrestled with the *Parmenides*, I have been struck by the crisis position this dialogue takes in Plato's work. A few years later it was Burnet who, in his *Greek Philosophy*, Part I, directed my attention to the problem of the *agrapha*.

I studied the almost 800 pages of Robin's work *La théorie platonicienne des idées et des nombres d'après Aristote* very precisely, and by this piece of "close reading" which, in fact, was rather a heavy job for a Plato-lover, was introduced into the rather abstruse material one has to digest when trying to get a hold of this subject-matter. In the book *Een keerpunt in Plato's denken* (with a summary in French: *Une crise dans la philosophie de Platon*), Amsterdam 1936, one finds the fruits of some ten years of Plato reading combined with a critical study of the implications of Burnet's and Taylor's theories, and a tentative exploration of the *agrapha* material as it was presented by Robin. The philosophical background of my book of 1936 was the hard struggle between Neo-Kantian idealism and a metaphysic of transcendent Being. Indeed this was the struggle for truth which is the very essence of philosophy. And certainly it was quite Socratico-Platonical in this context to remember the words of Kant in his Introduction to the first edition of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*: "that in this kind of speculations it is by no means allowed to have opinions"[10].

[10] "dass es in dieser Art von Betrachtungen auf keine Weise erlaubt sei zu meinen". Quoted in the Introduction of my *Keerpunt in Plato's denken*, 12, with reference to O. Wichmann, *Platon und Kant.* Eine vergleichende Studie, 1920.

Philosophy is striving for noetic insight. This is "knowing", to which corresponds a noetic object, and this is conceived as "really being", that is: existing in a transcendent, purely noetic order. Such is, no doubt, Plato's language in what is usually called "the classical dialogues": the pure *noumena* are the ὄντως ὄν. They "are" really, and in an order that transcends visible things.

About 1930 W. Freymann could speak in this sense of "Plato's search for a foundation of all philosophy"[11]. In Plato's quest for the "essence" of concepts and of things Freymann always sees the quest for the "real being" behind the phaenomenon[12]. Now this is exactly the question Natorp taught us to consider as methodically excluded. In Natorp's line we are led to ask: Is the *noumenon* a concept of the mind, that is, a *tool*, say, an instrument, both for thinking and for communicating? J. Stenzel[13] thought, indeed, that Plato, who had started with a theory of Ideas conceived as existing in a transcendent order, ended with ideas in the sense of concepts. To this we have to say: if by "concepts of the mind" it is supposed that the *noumenon* is *a product* of the human mind, we have to remember that this interpretation is explicitly rejected in the introductory part of the *Parmenides*[14]. For Plato the *eidos* or *idea* was not a concept of our mind in this sense that, by thinking it, we would never come into contact with any other kind of reality than that of our own thinking mind. On the contrary, Plato emphasizes *the reality of the object of our thought.* It is not a "thought", he says, that things participate of, in order to become that which they are. They participate of a "Being", that is, of something existing in an exemplary way in an objective order.

This is the meaning of those words we read in *Parm.* 132a1-2: "To speak for myself, it does seem to me to be as follows: that these 'Forms' exist in Nature as a kind of patterns, and that the other things (i.e. sensible things) resemble them and are likenesses, and that this participation in the Forms is for the other things nothing but a kind of resemblance." —In which, of course, the formula ἑστάναι ἐν τῇ φύσει (132d2) indicates an order of objective Being which transcends our minds.

For the vexing question of whether the Platonic 'Forms' should be taken either in a merely logical or in an ontological sense, this passage is

[11] *Platons Suchen nach einer Grundlage aller Philosophie*, 1930.

[12] That is, however, more in line with the traditional interpretation. It is also held by Fr. Solmsen, *Aristotle's System of the Physical World*, Ithaca (N.Y.) 1960, 25, though he does speak of "integration of movement in a larger pattern", professed in the *Sophist.* I am not quite sure that this interpretation, offered at p. 27 *o.c.*, does full justice to Plato's thought.

[13] *Studien*, 1917 and 1931: *Arete und Diairesis* and *Zur Logik des Sokrates*; *Zahl und Gestalt bei Platon und Aristoteles*, Leipzig und Berlin 1933².

[14] 132b3-c12.

decisive: Plato himself gives the answer, which cannot be denied without going against his explicit statement.

By its deductions in the Second Part this eminently critical dialogue directs us towards the "downward path", that is, the way of descending from the ἀνυπόθετον by means of the 'hypotheses' that are the 'Forms', to an insight into the structure of concrete things, in so far as they can be apprehended by the intellect.

Around the year 1930 the world of Plato scholars was almost obsessed by *the* problem of philosophy as it was then living in the minds of thinking people: human knowledge and its object, the so-called *datum*, the 'something' that, in spite of all 'critical' philosophy, seems to be somehow "behind" the phenomena,—and on the other hand 'critical philosophy' which declared any thought of such a 'something' to be the fruit of a fundamental error. In Heinrich Rickert's Preface to the sixth edition of his work on *The object of knowledge*[15], [6]1928, one can see the struggle of philosophical opinions as they were then expressed. He writes about "the error that appears from certain currents of the day": "Return to the object" and "Away from subjectivism" have come to be quite popular slogans, just as "the revival of metaphysics" and "Victory over *Transzendentalphilosophie*". The latter has to be written in the German form, because the German term "transzendental" denotes something quite different from the English word "transcendental" which is used as a simple equivalent of "transcendent". In German, "transzendental" denotes that which is a *condition for possible experience*; in English, however, the terms "transcendental" or transcendent equally indicate that which goes beyond sensible things.

Rickert goes on: "For the rest, with opposites such as subject-object, and "Kantianism" as against "metaphysics" not much has been achieved. ...To an allround philosophy both subject and object are indispensable, and as for metaphysic, its problem is by no means so simple as it is usually supposed to be. ...Decisive is only the question of what is meant by the science of the non-sensible. Does it necessarily lead to knowledge of that which is beyond the sensibles as well, and is it therefore rightly called *meta*physic in a pregnant sense? The *real* problem is exactly, whether not only the non-sensible but also the hyper-sensible can be scientifically known."

At the congress of the Kantgesellschaft in 1931 the Berlin professor Nicolai Hartmann held a discourse on the theme "Zum Problem der Realitätsgegebenheit". It was followed by a very animated discussion, in

[15] *Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis.* Einführung in die Transzendentalphilosophie. 6. Aufl., Tübingen 1928, Vorwort, XVIff.

which the Groningen Neokantian professor, Leo Polak, took an important part[16]. One could hardly wonder if, half a century later, at the Kant congress held in April 1981, the same theme had to be discussed, yet it was done under different perspectives, and no more in the highly dogmatical spirit of the Neokantianism we have known so well before 1930 and a few years later[17].

In 1931, among Plato scholars Constantin Ritter welcomed the apparent return to ontology as a coming-back to the non-perverted, normal human reason, which had been, so to speak, overwhelmed by a highly sophisticated kind of hypercriticism[18]. In my *Keerpunt*, published 1936, I had my doubts about the question of whether the "return to the opinion of any natural man whosoever" was actually a progress in philosophy[19].

No doubt for Plato the 'hypothesis' had a "transcendental" meaning in the German sense of the term: it was meant to be the condition for knowledge. And this it could only be, if it were taken not only in a logical, but also in an ontological sense. That which was "laid down" as a basis for knowledge, had to be something actually "being" (*Phaedo* 100b5-7, c4-6, d3-e3). Hackforth brought this out very well in his translation[20] and in his comments[21]. "It is indeed true", so he says, "that the Theory of Forms is in one aspect a theory of predication: all predication, for Plato, involves the assertion of a Form; but "the beautiful", "the great", "the small", are not mere universals, not mere logical entities: they are real existents, in such a sense that their "presence" (παρουσία) in sensibles, and the "sharing" (κοινωνία) in them by sensibles, are at least conceivable terms to express the relation in question."

One will have to remember this also in reading *Parm.* 135b5-c3: By not admitting the existence of "Forms" one would destroy the possibility of all thought and argument.

The eight "hypotheses" (as they were called from Antiquity up to the present day) of the second part of the *Parmenides* were explained in my *Keerpunt* as follows. (1) Distinction is made between "the one" in the ab-

[16] I referred to these discussions in my *Keerpunt*, 146-147.

[17] The Acts of the 5th International Kant-congress, held at Mainz 1981, came only quite recently in my hands. Part II (*Vorträge*) is a highly interesting volume. Gadamer proves to have his remembrances of the dogmatical Neokantianism as well as we have. He welcomes the new perspectives. W. H. Walsh has his problems about "a knowledge of appearances", and E. Heintel speaks about "the *here-existing* transcendentality".

[18] C. Ritter, *Kerngedanken der platonischen Philosophie*, 188f.

[19] *Een Keerpunt in Plato's denken*, 147.

[20] Cambridge 1955, 134.

[21] Ibid., 143.

solute sense, which does not admit of predication (the first Hypothesis), and "the one" taken in the relative sense, the "One Being", which implies a whole series of predicates (Hypoth. II). (2) The predication of "the one", taken in the relative sense, does not lead to a meaningful result. The purely formal deduction can certainly not be understood as a description of intelligible Being. On the other hand, when the consequences of the hypothesis that "the one is" are drawn with reference to "the other things", then we pass from "blind formalism" into meaningful reality (Hypoth. III).

(3) Even if the hypothesis is given in the negative form—"if One is not"—, a meaningful result is brought out, both in the fifth deduction (Hypoth. V) with reference to the One itself, and in the last one (Hypoth. VIII) with reference to "the other things". The fifth deduction brings out that the non-being One partakes of Non-being as well as of Being (162a1-b8). From this it follows that Non-being has to be admitted into the intelligible world (in the *Soph.*: the ἕτερον, principle of multiplicity). Thus, negation has been accepted to be a meaningful element in the ideal World. This if the One of the hypothesis be taken in the relative sense. Under the same condition the last deduction reinforces the link of the Intelligible Order with the world of sense experience, and that in a highly suggestive way (154b-165e).

On the whole one can certainly say that the *Parmenides* implies an orientation of philosophy towards the world of experience, and this starting from 'the One taken in the relative sense', the ἓν ὄν, which is intelligible Being. This is and must remain the necessary hypothesis for any form of knowledge (135b5-c3). Plato was faithful to his "hypothesis", laid down in the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*. But after the "upward path", which is the strict condition for philosophic thinking, he is now proceeding on the downward path, scheduled in *Rep.* VI 511b7-c2. True knowledge is always knowledge of Forms, and Forms are related to concrete things, which by means of them can be known, to a certain extent at least.

Negation has entered the realm of Forms. Life and motion appeared to belong to it as well, since it is Perfect Being. Certainly, it would be a serious misunderstanding to take this statement, made in *Soph.* 248e-249a, in such a sense that, by some kind of rehabilitation, sensible things would be raised here to the status of "true Being" and "added" to the realm of ὄντα, which before were limited to the order of νοητά. That would have been indeed a piece of thoroughly unplatonic thinking. It was Plato's own testimony, including that of the later dialogues, which prevented me from going that way.

The Oxford heirs of Natorp

Some modern philosophers cannot accept the idea of an intelligible Reality that would be ontologically superior to the world of sense-experience. They do not hesitate to take the *Sophistes* in the above-mentioned sense. Then, of course, they get into trouble with certain passages in Plato's later works. If in the *Soph.* there has been a rehabilitation of sensible 'being', then, what shall we do with such a passage as *Tim.* 27d5-28a4?

One thing must be said in honour of G.E.L. Owen, Oxford, who represented this theory: at his sudden death (1980) he left a school. He writes[22] as follows: Since Plato could not possibly have written such a passage after the *Parm.* and *Soph.*, it is obvious that the *Timaeus* was a much earlier work, which is to be dated immediately after the *Republic*, as the introductory conversation of the dialogue suggests. Is the linguistic evidence against such an early date? In a case like this that evidence cannot be decisive. Decisive can only be the consistency of the philosopher's thought.

In this Owen neglected the fact that not only verbal expression, but the whole tenor of the argument of the *Timaeus* and numerous details of it are characteristic of the later period of Plato's thought, so that it can be stated with certainty that in the present case the testimony of linguistic analysis is corroborated by the train of thoughts developed throughout the dialogue[23].

Besides these undeniable facts that actually exclude an early dating of the *Timaeus*, the problem Owen had to face does not occur in that dialogue only. It is found again in *Phil.* 59a-c, and even in the last book of the *Laws* (965b7-c6)[24].

It is not possible to come to a right understanding of Plato's philosophy of his later years—say, after the *Republic*,—without considering the testimony of Aristotle and a few other contemporary members of the Academy, preserved in the commentaries of Alexander of Aphrodisias and Simplicius, in Aristoxenus and Theophrastus, and paralleled in a section of Sextus Emp., *Adv.Math.* X. That is why in my presentation of Plato in *Greek Philos.* I, first ed. 1950, I produced a sec-

22 "The place of the *Timaeus* in Plato's dialogues", in: *Class.Quart.* N.S. 3, 1953, 79-95.

23 The plea against Owen's thesis is masterly made by H. Cherniss in *Am.J.Ph.* 78, 1957, 225-266.

24 In a following Ch. (III 2) we shall find Guthrie discussing Owen's later arguments against *Polit.* 285d-286a, as implying the theory of Forms in the sense of the middle period dialogues. A few other passages in the *Polit.* have to be considered too. G. thinks them convincing evidence, and rightly so.

tion on the ideal Numbers and First Principles. P. Wilpert, *Zwei aristotelische Frühschriften*, 1949, was particularly interested in the doctrine of First Principles.

Sir David Ross (1951)

Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, 1951, dealt amply with the *agrapha*. He gave an adequate reply to Cherniss's complete discarding of any 'unwritten doctrine' of Plato beside what we can read in the dialogues, and considered in particular the doctrine of ideal Numbers. Since 1967[25] Ross's book of 1951 has been cited as supporting the Tübingen thesis of "Platons ungeschriebene Lehre", in particular the doctrine of First Principles, as it is understood by H. J. Krämer and K. Gaiser. It is interesting, therefore, to see what Sir David really said about the topics under discussion.

(1) On the famous lecture(s) Περὶ τἀγαθοῦ, mentioned by Aristoxenus, which on the ground of his account has mostly been understood as having been held once and at a late date in Plato's life, Sir David Ross speaks of "a course of lectures" and states (p. 148): it is referred to as ἀκρόασις, but also as λόγοι and συνουσίαι. "The evidence, then, points to a course rather than to a single lecture, and that is also what the general probabilities point to." Here, indeed, Ross agrees with H. J. Krämer (1959), who in a reply to his opponents, published in *Museum Helveticum* 1964[26], vindicates his thesis that "lectures On the Good" were repeatedly held by Plato. However, Ross thinks without any doubt that those lectures were held in Plato's later years. He writes explicitly (p. 149) that this part of Plato's teaching was occupied precisely with those *later developments* of the ideal theory with which Aristotle acquaints us in Books A, M and N of the *Metaph.* Krämer's ideas about this matter are quite different. He holds that there is no evidence at all for a late date of those lectures. In fact, he imagines that Plato "lectured on the Good" from the foundation of the Academy onward and expounded always the same doctrine, to wit the doctrine of two ultimate principles, from which all Being is derived. This is for Krämer Plato's "true philosophy", that which he really intended to teach—and which, in Krämer's opinion at least, he *did* teach in his repeated lectures, held for the more advanced students in the Academy. In that sense it is an esoteric doctrine.

(2) Sir David Ross had very different ideas about what Plato meant by

[25] K. Gaiser, *Platons ungeschriebene Lehre* (referred to further as *Pl.u.L.*), Stuttgart, ²1967, Nachwort zur zweiten Auflage, 577.

[26] "Retraktationen zum Problem des esoterischen Platon", in *Mus. Helv.* 21, 1964, 137-167, especially 139-143.

those two ultimate Principles. As a matter of fact, Ross did not believe in Platonism as a system of derivation ("Ableitungssystem") in the sense of the later Tübingen school. He speaks extensively about the ideal Numbers, about the "things after the numbers" (ideal geometrical forms), about the intermediate place of the soul (between the Ideas and sensible things), while the objects of mathematics took an intermediate place as well; he deals with that passage of Aristotle in *De anima* 404b18-27, in which mental faculties are connected with the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4. But, if one is looking for a chapter headed "The doctrine of ultimate principles", one will not find it. What we do find is the following explanation of the function of the "one" and the "indefinite dyad". First, what should we think about the "generation" of ideal Numbers from the two ultimate Principles? Ross explains: This is a metaphorical way of indicating that every Number is, first, a plurality, next, a definite plurality (188). Next, Ross follows Aristotle in stating that "one" is a primary attribute, while "good" is necessarily a secondary or consequential attribute. In Plato's latest period "the Idea of One" was made the formal principle of all the Ideas. How was the One related to the good?

Ross asks the question. He finds in Plato "various highest Ideas". In the *Republic* the Idea of good appears as the supreme Idea. That must have been because here Plato approached the subject from the side of ethics. From that point of view he passes over to ontology "by a rather loose transition" (242). Later, in the *Philebus* the Idea of good appears again.

Really? In the same sense as in the *Rep.*: as "ultimate Principle"? Hardly. It is "the good for man" he is concerned with in the *Phil.* And not even the *peras* and the *apeiron* are to be taken as the ultimate principles in that dialogue. Here H. J. Krämer rightly remarks that in the *Phil. peras* and *apeiron* are *derived* principles. Ross, as a matter of fact, did not speak of a theory of Ultimate Principles as dominating Plato's thought, in his later years at least. He looked at "the various highest Ideas" he found in Plato—"the Good of the *Republic* and the *Philebus*" (so he says), "the Existence of the *Sophistes*" (the ὄν as "highest kind"), "the Truth of the *Philebus*" (65a2) "and the One of the Idea-number theory"—as foreshadowing the list of the *transcendentalia* of the schoolmen: Bonum, Ens, Verum, Unum, most general predicates of all that is.

H. Gomperz, 1930

Quite different is the "outline of Plato's Philosophy" which Heinrich Gomperz presented to the International Congress of Philosophy at

Oxford 1930 under the title *Plato's System of Philosophy*. Ross did not believe that Plato ever made one system of philosophy, Gomperz thought he did. And this not only in his later years but right from his beginnings, even before the foundation of the Academy.

The main features of Plato's system of philosophy are clear: it is not just assuming "Ideas" as the "essence" of things and ontologically distinguished from them as their archetypes; it was a *derivative system*, in which things depend on Ideas, Ideas on Numbers, and Numbers on ultimate Principles or "elements". Referring to Hermodorus ap. Simpl. *in Phys.* 248.8 (D.) Gomperz says that "the One" stands for all that is equal, lasting and harmonical, while all the rest is unstable, formless, indefinite and unreal. According to Aristotle Plato considered the One as the cause of the good, the other element as the cause of evil. So the elements were not conceived as mere mathematical principles, but in particular as the Principles of both cosmology and ethics.

This then was Plato's philosophy, at least in 366 and in 361/60,—and *why not before 366*? It was essentially a dualistic system, and Gomperz thinks this might have been the hidden sense of the Second part of the *Parmenides*: that deductions made from one underlying principle, be it ἕν or ἓν ὄν, can never lead to a satisfactory result. For that purpose two principles are needed. And since in the First part of the *Parm.* the theory of the Ideas as it is advocated there by Socrates, is criticised by Parmenides, this probably means that the so-called 'classical' form of that theory is to be replaced by a new form, which connects the Ideas with numbers, and derives numbers from the 'elements'.

However, Gomperz finds earlier traces of this theory. In *Rep.* 506d-e Plato is tending to trace moral virtue, the essence of which is equality, order and harmony, back to the One[27].

But the principles of order and harmony were present in the *Gorgias* as well (503e-508a).

Gomperz concludes: probably the theory of two ultimate Principles ripened in Plato's mind between 399 (in the circle of Megara, where Euclides identified the Eleatic One with the Good) and 388, under the Pythagorean influence of Archytas.

A few remarks to Gomperz' account of what he called Plato's system of philosophy.

(1) G. started from his own interpretation of the *Seventh Letter*[28], in particular of 341c. He took this passage as proving that Aristotle's and a few others' testimonies are more important for our knowledge of Plato's philosophy than the philosopher's own written works. We have to state that by this opinion G. took a wrong starting-point. Certainly we have to take Aristotle's testimony into account and to consider it very carefully. But that does not imply that it should be more important to us than Plato's own writings.

(2) G. places a heavy emphasis on the dualist character of Plato's theory. I cannot see that this is founded on Plato's own thought as it is expressed in his written works. On the contrary, from the *Apology* up to the *Laws* there appears to be quite an amount of evil in man and the human world, but never so as to prevail or be on a footing of equality with the rational power both in man and in the universe. Just as in the physical world the non-rational force of ἀνάγκη is definitely subordinated to the rational power of Noûs (*Tim.* 47e-48a), thus in man and the human world evil, however strong, may always be overcome by the force of the rational will (*Nom.* X 904a-c). If there is ultimately an indefinite Principle underlying all disorder, that is, all evil forces both in man and the universe, such a principle is unthinkable to Plato, and it would be impious to think, that it could rank at the same level as the ultimate Principle of goodness and of Being (*Nom.* X 897b-c). This is what we have to keep in mind when finding in Sextus Empiricus' account a scheme that ends in a dualist position[29].

(3) G. interprets *Rep.* 506d-e very strongly ἐξ ὑποθέσεως: he supposes that the author wants to trace moral virtue (justice) back to the One, which is the Principle of equality, consistency, order and harmony.

Well, *ultimately* it is. However, the ἀγαθόν of *Rep.* 508e-509c has such a marked character of utter transcendency—as the *cause* of both Being (intelligible Being) and its being-known it is said to transcend Being—, that it seems too much of a short cut to declare: "the virtuous soul takes part of the One and Good".

(4) Of course, the principles of order and harmony are present in the *Gorgias* (503e-504d, 506d-507a and 507e-508a). G. notices their presence and that of the μετρητική passage in the *Protag.* He concludes: The doctrine of the two ultimate principles probably originated from the years between "Megara" (399) and "Sicily" (388): on the one hand, Euclides who identified the Eleatic ὄν with the Socratic good, on the other hand the Pythagoreans with the principles of *kosmos* and *taxis*. To the Eleatic One or Good which excludes 'the many', Plato would have added his Principle of multiplicity.

[27] Exactly the way in which we shall find H. J. Krämer arguing. In fact, the interpretation is a remarkable example of arguing ἐξ ὑποθέσεως.

[28] *Platons Selbstbiographie*, 1928.

[29] Cf. *infra* my ch. VI, "Was Plato a dualist?", in particular 179f. (on *Theaet.* 176a) and 190-203 on the two ultimate principles.

G.'s way of "backdating" is a highly interesting precedent to H. J. Krämer's method: it is just as categorical, as simplistic and as little convincing.

(5) On the whole it must be said that G.'s unrestricted speaking of "Plato's system of philosophy" does not plead in favour of his interpretation. On the contrary, it tells us that here something is ascribed to Plato which that philosopher himself says he has never been able to write down, while others without any doubt were still less able to do so.

H. J. Krämer, 1959

Almost thirty years later H. J. Krämer[30] took up every detail of Gomperz' view and strongly emphasized the whole of it: Plato's philosophy was something very different from what it is usually thought to have been; it was a system of ontology, the essence of which was that all things being were derived from two Principles. Plato was not in the first place the philosopher of a theory of Ideas—that was only a secondary aspect of his philosophy—he was essentially the man who continued and achieved the Pre-Socratic ἀρχή search. This he has been from his beginnings, and this is what he taught in his school, throughout the whole period of about forty years, from its foundation to his death. It is absurd, Kr. thinks, to imagine that Plato conceived his theory of the two ultimate Principles only towards the end of his life, a thesis which would be more or less implied in the rather generally accepted assumption of the late date of what is usually referred to as "the lecture On the Good". We found Sir David Ross stating that the evidence about that ἀκρόασις was rather in favour of a course than of a single lecture. But Kr. goes far: he takes the ἀκρόασις on the Good to have been Plato's regular teaching, done in the Academy for the audience of a selected group of more advanced students, to whom he expounded his theory of the ultimate principles and how everything had to be reduced to them. Since this was Plato's 'real' philosophy from the beginning of his teaching career, we have to abandon the theory of a development of Plato's doctrine, which flourished during the last century and is still adhered to by most Plato scholars.

On this point, by the way, Krämer did not have to go back to Heinrich Gomperz, but could be directly inspired by his own teachers at Tübingen and Heidelberg, where H. G. Gadamer was definitely against the development idea, while also W. Schadewalt was extremely critical about it and had his good arguments for thinking it rather naive to construct a line of "development of Plato's thought" from the sequence of the dialogues[31].

[30] *Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles* (= *APA*), above, n. 3.

How does Kr. see the relation between the dialogues and the oral teaching? First, in time the two ways of expression run parallel. Next, as for the contents, their subject-matter was different, as their form of expression was. Third, and most of all, the difference of contents means a difference of importance, the dialogues being qualified as of far less importance than the oral teaching which contained Plato's "true" philosophy. The dialogues were supposed to have been of a "protreptic" character, as was pointed out by Gaiser about the same time[32].

Kr. supports his theory by both positive and negative signs. As positive "signs" he mentions not only the μετρητική-passage of the *Protag.* With the "more and less" in the field of ἡδονή and λύπη—a passage which in his opinion is "proof" for the presence of the Second Principle in Plato's thought at that early date—and the *kosmos* and *taxis* notions in the *Gorgias*, alleged by Gomperz as well, further the πρῶτον φίλον of the *Lysis* as being of the same order as αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν in *Symp.* 211-212, but also the search for the one eidos in the earliest Socratic dialogues. Are not such passages "signs" of the presence of the One in the thinking of the early Plato?

We shall find Findlay (1974) reading Plato in the same way. Of course *in a sense* they are right: both the search for unity and the principle of order presuppose the ultimate Principle of the One. Yet, they do not prove that at the early stage of Plato's thought such a Principle was consciously recognized by him. Findlay leaves it extremely vague, but Kr. definitely defends that from the beginnings both Principles, the One and the indefinite *Dyas, must* have been clearly conceived in Plato's mind.

For Kr. the negative signs are abounding: in almost all of the greater dialogues it is *said* that the essential things are deliberately not discussed[33]. In the *Protag.* the meaning of μετρητική is not revealed; in the *Rep.* reservations are made with regard to explaining the nature of the Good. Similar expressions of keeping things back on purpose occur in the *Soph.*, *Polit.*, *Phaedr.* and *Tim.* Kr. states: The doctrine of First Principles has deliberately not been treated anywhere in the dialogues. It was reserved for oral teaching to the restricted circle of insiders. Therefore it is well-founded to speak of an esoteric doctrine. Both the *Seventh Letter*

[31] Cf. my remembrances of the Heidelberg Plato Colloquy of 1967, noted in "Was Plato a dualist?" *infra*, Chap. VI, where I cited Schadewaldt's good remarks about the grounds of an *Entwicklungstheorie*.

[32] K. Gaiser, *Protreptik und Paränese bei Platon*, Tübinger Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 40, 1959.

[33] Kr., *APA* 389.

and *Phaedr.* 274e-278d testify to it in an unmistakable way. The τιμιώτερα were singled out for oral teaching[34].

However categorically Kr. may speak about the passages referred to, it is exactly on this basic point that his interpretation does not stand criticism. In fact, it came immediately. The matter is that Krämer is so convinced of the greater weight of the theory of First Principles that he cannot see that anybody might give another sense to the term τιμιώτερα. None the less, many others *do* think that the intelligible World is not of minor value and that for Plato not even the soul was. Thus, Kr. found G. Vlastos and H. D. Voigtländer against him, and we must say, with the greatest right[35]. Moreover, the latter pointed out that the *Phaedrus* passage, which stands in a rhetorical context, does not apply to most of Plato's dialogues at all, since the dialogue form was exactly the kind of expression that removed the disadvantages of a written *memoir.* As for the meaning of the philosophical passage of the *Seventh Letter*, this was taken up by K. von Fritz (1966)[36] and by several others[37]. We must agree with those critics who pointed out that in the *Seventh Letter* Plato did not oppose written to oral teaching, as if the latter would not give rise to any kind of misunderstanding. The difficulty of communication presents itself in both methods. The essential is that "the other" has to "see" the point himself,—and this is what does not always happen, in particular when the subject under discussion is difficult to understand, as is the case with the reality of the intelligible World. And it is the νοητά that are the τιμιώτερα.

Kr. is in so far right when speaking of a "Sonderlehre", that the theory of First Principles is not explicitly treated in the dialogues. But from Aristoxenus' story on the ἀκρόασις "On the Good", even if such lectures were held more than once, it does certainly not follow that this was Plato's doctrine from his beginnings. As for the positive and negative "signs" of the presence of the First Principles "behind" the earlier dialogues, both of them are so to Kr. because he reads those passages very strongly ἐξ ὑποθέσεως. The unbiased reader will be only amazed at Kr.'s interpretation. Take, for example, the intermezzo in the

[34] Kr., *APA* 23, 393ff., 461, 467.

[35] G. Vlastos in *Gnomon* 1963, espec. 654; H. D. Voigtländer in *Archiv f. Geschichte d. Philos.* 1963, espec. 206.

[36] K. von Fritz, "Die philosophische Stelle im siebten platonischen Brief und die Frage der 'esoterischen' Philosophie Platons", in: *Phronesis* 11, 1966, 117-153. Also: "Zur Frage der 'esoterischen' Philosophie Platons", in *Archiv f. Geschichte d. Philos.* 49, 1967, 255-268.

[37] Among others by E. Dönt, *Platons Spätphilosophie und die Akademie.* Untersuchungen zu den platonischen Briefen, zu Platons 'Ungeschriebener Lehre' und zur Epinomis des Philipp von Opus, S. B. Wien, phil.-hist. Kl. 251, 3, Wien 1967.

Theaet. where it is said that "evil haunts this place" (176a), and that will always be so, "for the good must necessarily have an opposite". Is that an argument in favour of the two ultimate Principles? Certainly, in the *Theaet.* passage the θεῖον παράδειγμα is opposed to the ἄθεον, the former indicating that which is above the human world. The θεῖον is εὐδαιμονέστατον, a term which indicates the highest perfection. But are we touching here on that supreme Principle which in *Rep.* 508e-509a is said to be the cause of all Being and as such beyond it? And is the ἄθεον the Principle of multiplicity which is the Great-and-Small?[38]

I think not. Strictly speaking, "the good" is used here quite differently from that passage in the *Rep.*, and there is no reference at all to the notion of the great-and-small. Is there in the *Rep.*?

Here too, Kr. has his own solution: "Speaking of the Agathon as the First Principle makes no sense unless the Second Principle is assumed as well". Ergo—it must have been there. Hence he can say with so much conviction that the so-called later doctrine, which is granted by *inter alios* P. Wilpert and Sir David Ross to have been Plato's for about the last twenty years of his life, must have been his at least in the years he was writing the *Republic.*

My reply to Krämer

To Wilpert's and Sir David's names he might have added mine. Since they have passed away it is up to me, I think, to make a critical note here. It is this, that Kr.'s "evidence" for this case is only valid for those who, like him, assume the dualistic metaphysics of two ultimate Principles as absolutely necessary, and that in Plato's form. It is a rather ironical fact that J. N. Findlay, who could appear e.g. to Gadamer as essentially supporting the Tübingen theory[39], flatly denies the dualistic character of Plato's metaphysics which, for the rest, he sees as an essential unity, from the philosopher's early years up to his end.

But perhaps the question of dualism, though emphasized by Kr., is not even so important. After all, Findlay does admit that Plato must have had a principle of multiplicity in his mind, either consciously conceived from the beginning—which of course is very doubtful—or somehow implicitly admitted. In so far as he thinks that for Plato the

[38] Kr. on the two παραδείγματα of *Theaet.* 176e: *APA* 134f. "Der Dualismus ist hier ontologisch fixiert". The second Principle is explained in the *Parm.*: there it appears to lie in πλῆθος (πολλά, ἄπειρον, ἀπειρία, ἡ ἑτέρα φύσις, 158bff.), which is opposed to the One. It is thus the Indefinite Dyad.

[39] H. G. Gadamer gave a perspicacious account of Findlay's "Plato" in *Philos. Rundschau* 24 (1977), 204-209.

Second Principle, however necessary, has never been of the same rank as the First, Findlay is certainly right. The doubtful point is, however, whether that Second Principle was "explicitly" thought out by Plato in his earlier period, including the *Republic*. This I am inclined to deny.

For the earliest period of Plato's literary work the μετρητική-passage of the *Protag.* has almost got the value of the "locus classicus". Is it conclusive? I think not. First, that ἡδονή and λύπη have to be prudently weighed, was taught by Aristippus as well[40]. A more and less is evidently implied in this kind of judgement. The wisdom required here was certainly not particularly Platonic. Next, that in the *Protag.* Plato's Socrates uses the hedonistic argument not in his own name but from a foreign perspective, is recognized by Kr. himself. What is relevant, however, is the *form* of the argument, so he may think, both the notion of μετρητική which occurs here, and those of more and less. Up to a certain degree I am willing to grant this. It is true that certain terms are used here which later will be used again in a clearly different and more profound sense. If Kr. is willing to grant this, we have to notice (1) that apparently there has been quite an important "development" between the *Protag.* and the *Politicus*; (2) that the μετρητική of the former, which is a merely quantitative process, is essentially different from the qualitative kind which is opposed to it in *Polit.* 284e.

Something similar has to be noticed about the use of the terms "more and less", which occur in *Protag.* 355d-357a with reference to ἡδονή and λύπη. Kr. immediately gives them a wider scope by speaking of "quantitative Zergliederung der Sinnenwelt"[41]. That permits him to pass on to "Gliederung der Sinnenwelt nach den Prinzipien des ἕν und μέγα καὶ μικρόν" ("Prinzip der Vielheit").

Evidently. But the question was exactly whether in this early period Plato actually conceived those Principles as such. And that is what we find no evidence for.

Neither do we find it in *Charm.* 168b-169a nor in any of the three passages of the *Rep.* in which different kinds of concepts are mentioned that imply a relation, either to an object (such as ἐπιστήμη or δόξα, which are always 'of something') or to a correlative (right/left, more/less, greater/smaller) (438a-d), just "relative notions", such as either great or small (479b-c) or other qualities of a subject (523c-524c). The fact that Plato reflected on the different kinds of relative notions does not authorize us to say that he "must" have held the theory of the two Ultimate Principles[42].

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[40] Diog.Laert. II 91.
[41] Kr., *APA* 504f. On μετρητική cf. 490ff.
[42] Ibid. 503.

For the presence of the One in Plato's earlier thought Kr. finds an argument in the *Lysis*, 218-220. In the πρῶτον φίλον he finds the same ascent to the First Principle or ἀρχή as in *Symp.* 211-212 (αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν) and *Rep.* 508e-509a (the ἀγαθόν)[43]. Well, of course, if the First Principle "must" have been present "behind" the *Protag.* already, then it is present in the *Lysis* as well. In that passage the word πρῶτον is used. None the less, the whole train of thought is very different from that of both the *Symp.* and the *Rep.* passages. Voigtländer saw that perfectly well[44].

I heard the *Lysis* argument being used by Gadamer in the Plato Colloquy of Heidelberg 1967, and spoke against it. Probably the argument has been used by Gadamer in his oral teaching before it got into Kr.'s work. It is apparently a piece of the Tübingen-Heidelberg School-tradition[45]. Now certainly this tradition is still in move, and it is rather curious to see how many things disappear at certain moments and come back at others. On the whole I have the impression that many of Kr.'s arguments are still too easily accepted, in particular by a number of German scholars. One of the arguments that should be abandoned is, I think, the *Lysis* argument.

Let us go back for a moment to Kr.'s central theme: the notion of *aretè*.

Kr. distinguishes an earlier from a later period in Plato's thought. The earlier period is marked by the notions of *kosmos* and *taxis*, which he finds dominating not only in the *Gorgias*, but in the *Republic* as well. Here the *kosmos* and *taxis* view of *arete* reaches its top in the definition of justice, given in Book IV 433a-434c: τὰ αὑτοῦ πρᾶττειν.

Now certainly in this view justice is a question of inner harmony and thus may be said to derive from the *kosmos-taxis* "Seinslehre"[46]. Kr., who used that formula with reference to *Gorg.* 506c-507c, goes much further. He declares: "This notion of arete is valid up till the *Sophistes* for all kinds of being, without any limitation"[47]. And since there is this continuity in the notion of *arete*, he rejects anything like a "middle period" in Plato's thought, as has been usually admitted. Distinction is to be made only between an earlier and a later period, so he thinks, because in *Polit.* 382c-285c the terms of ὑπεροχή and ἔλλειψις make their appearance and a higher kind of μετρητική is introduced, in which the "more and less" are

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[43] Ibid. 500f.
[44] In the above-mentioned review in *Archiv f. Gesch. d. Phil.* (1963), 209.
[45] Gadamer expounds his views on the Platonic dialogues, including the early ones, in the volume *Idee und Zahl* (Abh.d.Heidelb.Akad.d.Wiss., philos.-hist. Kl., 1968, 2.Abh.), 10-30. He refers back to his earlier work *Platons dialektische Ethik.* (1931); new ed. 1968.
[46] Kr., *APA* 67.
[47] Ibid., 75.

not just quantitatively weighed off from each other, but a "right measure", the μέτριον, is posited to be between them as an absolute norm of good and evil, both in arts and sciences (τέχναι and ἐπιστῆμαι) and for moral life. It is of a particular significance for political science, which has to find the καιρός, the right moment for action, and the δέον of temperaments. This appears to be *the middle between two* extremes[48].

Thus, towards the end of the *Polit.* the μέτριον is found to be the μέσον, a "structure" Kr. finds frequently present in the *Laws* as well[49]. E.g. 696bc: σωφροσύνη bewares of a too-much of honour; 631c: justice is a matter of interior order. "The clear-cut norm structure of the φυσικὴ ἀρετή in Plato's later work is the consequent extension and precision of the concept of arete of the earlier and middle writings"[50].

Συνακολουθεῖν τῷ θεῷ is an early Pythagorean precept. Kr. finds it in *Laws* 716c and comments: "Following God" consists in avoiding the ἄμετρον and seeking the μέτριον. I am not going to deny that this was one aspect of Plato's thought. However, when rereading the outline of the morally good life given in pages 717a-734e of the *Laws*, which follow the statement that "God is for us the measure of all things, much more so than—as it is said—a man", one will find there hardly anything about μέτριον and μέσον. What we do find there is the following.

First of all the prescript of honouring the gods. They are specified as the traditional gods of Greek religion. Next follow demons, heroes and forefathers, according to the legal cult, and next one's living parents, to whom one has the greatest debts.

Of the things that are given us as our own we have to honour first and foremost our own soul and see that it becomes as good as possible. For nothing in the world is as precious a thing as virtue. Consequently that is what one has to strive after, more than anything else. The best and most effective way is to avoid the company of evil men and always follow the better ones, who give us the example of doing what is right and not doing what is wrong.

The second place of the things given us is appointed to the body, which we must honour after the soul, and this in the right way. In this case the notion of the μέσον comes in. For neither a beautiful nor a strong body, neither a swift nor a tall one is precious, not even a healthy one, though that might seem so to many,—certainly not the opposite of these either, but something between the two conditions. That will be by far the safest!

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48 Ibid., 159-161.

49 Ibid., 164f.

50 Ibid., 167. Here it happens to Kr., in spite of his own theory, to speak of the "Arete-Begriff der frühen und mittleren Schriften". An occasional lapsus towards a traditional 'development'-view.

For the first mentioned qualities make the souls puffed up and reckless, while their opposites make them lowly and unfree. The same applies to property and wealth. Plato concludes this whole section by stating: "It is impossible that a good man would be very wealthy" (*Laws* V 742e-743a).

How is virtue described in these pages? The main features are depicted as follows (730b-731a). *Truth* ranks first of all good qualities. Whosoever wants to be "blessed" (Plato uses the word that is regularly predicated of the gods) and happy, has to partake of this from his first beginnings. Thus he will be trustworthy, otherwise not. And if one cannot trust him, he will have no friends, and in his old age he will be left alone. After truth comes *justice.* Precious is the man who never does wrong. The man who helps the magistrates in punishing injustice, is highly praiseworthy. The same applies to self-restraint (σωφροσύνη) and wisdom (φρόνησις), and whatever other good qualities a man may have, in particular when he is able to share it with others.

The thought of the *Gorg.* that the unjust are always to be pitied, recurs in our passage of the *Laws* (731cd). But a most remarkable feature is this one: *Selfishness* is declared to be the greatest of all vices (731d-732b). Plato insists on it, apparently against an existent and rather generally accepted view. "It is always said that every man is by nature a friend to himself, and that this must actually be so." No, says Plato, self-love is in fact a most dangerous thing. For the lover is blinded with regard to the object of his love, and that is why his judgement about right and wrong is more or less seriously affected: he will always be inclined to assess his own interests higher than what is true. Therefore he who wants to be a great man must not love himself and his own interests, but that which is just, whether it is done about himself or about somebody else.

Next, Plato remembers the need of self-command, both in showing joy and grief, in good and bad fortune. Hope and confidence in God are always becoming to the good man in whatever circumstances.

At the end the question is raised: Which lives are the happiest. Reply: the temperate and the wise, the courageous and the healthy, each of these will be a happy life.

Why this strong emphasis on happiness? Is that then the essence of the good life, rather than the μέτριον or μέσον?

I think, here we are touching on an important point. For here, if anywhere, it appears clearly that Kr.'s theory, though of course it is not without any foundation, yet lays the accents so as to give an unreal picture of what Plato's thought was like. Voigtländer noticed that. Granting that the μέσον-norm of *Polit.* 284e is valid in the field of φυσικὴ ἀρετή, in forms of government and in at least some of the τέχναι, he observes that

it has on no account that sense of the ruling principle in ethics which Kr. attributes to it in the later works of Plato, in particular the *Laws*. Neither in the *Philebus* nor in the *Laws* can he find the μέτριον, or μέτριον equalled to the μέσον[51].

Plato permits us to make a counter-check of what he considered to be a principle of absolutely basic importance in the field of moral life. It is this: *that the best life is also the happiest*; in other words, that virtue and happiness always go together. This he mentions in the preliminary remarks to the *Laws* (II 664b-c) as a matter of divine authority, which has to be held out to children and young people by all and everybody. He calls it the summary and chief teaching of all moral principles.

That is what he had to say to everybody, and certainly, nothing gives us the right to declare that this was not his "true philosophy". Aristotle at any rate was fully aware of the importance of that which his master himself called the κεφάλαιον of all moral philosophy. He testified to it in the short poem he made in Plato's honour[52].

Of course this does not take away the fact that Plato had quite a developed system of philosophy in which the principles of logic were thought out and mathematics played a highly important role. It does not exclude a doctrine of first principles either. But it does exclude the thesis that for Plato the more or less formalized meta-mathematical school doctrine was his only true philosophy. One of the essential tasks that were undertaken in the Academy was that of legislation. To Plato this was the philosopher's task and he was certainly not the man to disown that as a matter of minor importance.

So we must be at variance with Kr. in his evaluation of Plato's philosophy, both in its earlier and in its later periods.

A word has to be said about the *kosmos* and *taxis* notion of *arete*, found by Kr. both in the *Gorg.* and in the *Republic.*

(1) Certainly, the manifest Pythagorean influence in the *Gorg.* 503ff, is very interesting, and we can see how important such a notion as that of the geometrical mean, known to Plato through Archytas, remained in his socio-political theories[53]. But it is not so that in the *Gorg.* the notions

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[51] Voigtländer in *Archiv f. Gesch. d. Phil.* (1963), 201. He is quite right in stating: "die einzige von besonderen Tendenzen freie Formulierung des μέσον (*Polit.* 284e) ist, von der unsicheren Auffassung der Stelle einmal abgesehen, jedenfalls zu schwach, um, aus ihrem Zusammenhang herausgelöst, letztlich allein den Nachweis einer 'einhelligen Normenlehre der späteren Dialoge' zu tragen".

[52] Fr. 673 Rose³ = Ross, Fr. sel., Carm. 2.

[53] Cf. *Rep.* VIII 558c, in which "democracy" is ironically defined as the system in which everybody gets the equal quantity, i.e.: equal parts are distributed to unequal persons.

of *kosmos* and *taxis*, of ὁμόνοια and ἁρμονία, were the leading principles in the struggle for justice fought by Socrates against the Übermensch theories of Callicles (488-499b). Socrates holds that the unjust man is always unhappy, and this in the highest degree if he is not punished. He maintains the value of the morally good (the ἀγαθόν) against pleasure (the ἡδύ). Neither was there anything about *kosmos* and *taxis* in the preceding discussion about rhetoric (452e-463d). Philosophy is opposed to rhetoric, just as the service of untruth and delusion stand against the service of truth. As two principles of life they are opposite to each other: rhetoric serves injustice, philosophy righteousness; philosophy cares for the soul, rhetoric never does.

Behind Socrates' struggle for truth and justice there was certainly the belief in an objective moral order which is above man and, just as it was for Socrates in the *Apology* and in the *Crito*, was acknowledged as a divine Order. Man is responsible for his deeds and will be judged hereafter. That is the ruling idea of the *Gorgias.* The *kosmos* and *taxis* principles have their place within this framework, but do not prevail.

(2) In *Rep.* I *arete* is taken in a very general sense and defined by "fulfilling its proper function well". Anything having a proper function can have its *arete.* Since man's proper function lies in the field of social life, his *arete* must be of a social character.—This is following another line of thought than in the Pythagorean view of cosmic order, though that had its function in the human world as well.

(3) In the later books of the *Rep.* the perspective is different. The ἴδιον ἔργον theory was a matter of teleological immanence, as Kr. rightly remarks. But when in VI 484b the philosophers are defined as those who are able to live in contact with *that which is always the same and identical with itself*, i.e. with intelligible Being, it is clear that these men, who by their insight attain to the vision of eternal Truth, will have a higher kind of virtue, inspired by that vision of the ὄντως ὄν. The difference was marked in *Phaedo* 82, and the "higher virtue" is known to us from e.g. *Symp.* 212a.

I cannot say that in the dialogues of the middle period, including the *Rep.*, in which again and again "true virtue" is referred to, the *kosmos* and *taxis* principles take a prevailing place. It is certainly true that they are implied in the unusual definition of justice, reached in *Rep.* IV. And of course σωφροσύνη always implies a *taxis* character. Thus, I am quite willing to grant that those notions now and then appear to have been present in Plato's mind and that they could be integrated very well in his thoughts about moral values. But I do not see they are so dominating in Plato's "earlier" thought, even up to the *Politikos*, as Kr. would have us believe. Consequently, both with regard to the "earlier", including the

middle dialogues, and to those of the later period, I agree with H. D. Voigtländer's restrictions to Kr.'s theories.

Let me conclude by stating that Kr. has given a good contribution to our understanding of the continuity between Plato's and Aristotle's thinking, both in the field of logic and metaphysics and in the field of ethics. That his chapter on μεσότης in Aristotle's ethics belongs to the most valuable parts of his book, has been generally recognized.

Retractations?

In *Museum Helveticum* of 1964 Kr. published an article of 30 pages which by its title suggests that he retracted something[54]. Did he really?

The reader does not get the impression. On the contrary, against the arguments brought forward by Vlastos and Voigtländer Kr. keeps his ground, (1) in holding the existence of a "Sonderlehre" beside the dialogues; (2) in maintaining that by Plato preference was given to oral teaching (both in the *Phaedr.* and the *Seventh Letter*); (3) that the philosopher disposes of τιμιώτερα than that which is found in his writings; (4) that the oral teaching which "ran behind" the dialogues, is to be identified with the Π. τἀγαθοῦ; (5) that in his earlier writings Plato was on purpose silent about the doctrine of First Principles, a doctrine which he did hold, but reserved for his oral teaching; (6) that in Sext. Emp., *Adv.math.* X, the section 263-276 which is paralleled by Hermodorus ap. Simpl., *Phys.* 248, testifies to a categorical division made by Plato and a reduction to the two First Principles; (7) that also the passage in Aristotle's *De an.* II 404b18ff. must be traced back to Plato[55].

Moreover, against Voigtländer Kr. declares it to be quite unusual that a philosopher would come to any new insights after his 40th year. The idea of an aged philosopher who only towards the end of his life would have reflected on First Principles, seems simply absurd to him. (In which

[54] Hans Joachim Krämer, "Retraktationen zum Problem des esoterischen Platon", in: *Museum Helveticum* 21, 1964, 137-167.

[55] Both Sextus and the *De anima* passage were rejected by Vlastos as testimonies on Plato's doctrine. As for Sextus, it is somewhat too easy to discard the whole passage, because the first part (248-262) certainly does not stem from Plato unless very indirectly and partly. The section to be cited as a testimony to what others (Wilpert, Ross, De Vogel) called Plato's later doctrine, begins with 263. The *De anima* passage was attributed to Xenocrates by Cherniss, whose authority is shared by Vlastos. Gaiser treated both texts extensively in his contribution to the Heidelberg Plato Colloquy of 1967, "Quellenkritische Probleme der indirekten Platon-Überlieferung, in: *Idee und Zahl*, (full reference above: n. 45), Heidelberg 1968, 31-84. This was a reply to Vlastos' complaint (in Gnomon 1963) that in Kr.'s work not anything of "Quellenkritik" could be found with reference to Sextus.

he seems to forget completely that for Plato a man is not really mature for philosophy before about his 50th year .....).

In particular, "Rückschlüsse auf das Frühwerk" are declared to be justified (165). Moreover, Kr. maintains that objective interpretation of earlier dialogues points to a "Prinzipienontologie". The first beginnings are traced back to the Megarics.

Since then all this is maintained by Kr. up to the last page of the *Mus.Helv.* paper, the reader will ask himself, in what respect and where the author retracts anything?

To this question he will find a reply in the last footnote of the article, n°. 100. It reads:

"Many critics, among others Voigtländer (195), erroneously imputed to me the idea that the reports we have on Π. τἀγαθοῦ as to their contents apply to the period of Plato's philosophical beginnings already. That was never my idea and I nowhere asserted that." (*Ich habe das niemals gemeint und nirgends behauptet*).

That is amazing indeed. For, what else is the contents of the reports we have on Π. τἀγαθοῦ but the "Zweiprinzipienlehre", and was not that the doctrine Kr. was constantly asserting as Plato's from his first philosophical beginnings onwards? What then did he never hold?

He explains himself as follows. "What I tried to make clear was exclusively the "ontologische Grundkonzeption" as expounded in *APA* 535-37 ("the One as principle of being, of value and of knowledge"). "For all the rest I left the question of development open and only warned for overrating the dialogues as testimonies in an uncritical way."

What is "all the rest"? The conception of the Second Principle, the indefinite Dyad? But that is precisely what Kr. asserted to be "gesichert" for Plato's earlier period by the μετρητική passage of the *Protag.* And for the presence of the One in the earlier period, the *Lysis* argument was used as evidence. Thus Kr.'s "retractation" would make indeed a real retractation, if at least he intends to abandon those views and arguments that take so important a place in his book *APA*.

The Heidelberg Colloquy of 1967

It is true that at the Plato Colloquy of Heidelberg 1967[56] Kr. did not speak about the earlier period. On the whole, what he presented at that occasion was remarkably acceptable. However, the *Lysis* argument was used by Gadamer.

[56] H. J. Krämer, "Die grundsätzlichen Fragen der indirekten Platon-Überlieferungen", in: *Idee und Zahl*, Heidelberg 1968 (above, n. 45).

In the volume *Idee und Zahl* (Heidelberg 1968) Gadamer expounds his views on the *agrapha* matter. He declines to speak of "secret doctrine", or even of "esoteric doctrine", since that would evoke similar ideas. None the less, there has certainly been some oral teaching, with discussion, in the School. The dialogues, though of primary importance to us since they are Plato's own written works, are by no means the only evidence we have. And they were deliberately limited in their scope ("bewusst zurückhaltend"). They belong to the protreptic kind[57]. No doubt, the oral teaching went further.

Gadamer does not share Stenzel's view that the *Parmenides* would have marked a "crisis" in Plato's thought[58]. He is rather struck by the fact that, from the beginning, Plato's works contain indications that point to the Number-structure of the logos ("Hinweise auf die Arithmos-Struktur des Logos").

Of what is he thinking? "The connection of "one" and "good" is present in Plato's dialogues from a very early date," so he says. It runs from the *Protag.* up to the *Rep.* And there it is precisely the essential unity of the four chief virtues that is aimed at. Hence the connection of one and agathon in *Rep.* VI. "Darin liegt nichts vom neuplatonischen Einheitsdenken", so he assures us. Does he decline a "Seinsmetaphysik" in Krämer's sense? It seems so. On the basis of Aristotle's account in *Metaph.* A 6 he is convinced of the presence of the two ultimate Principles, either in or "behind" the dialogues. He assures us that he does not want to say that the notion of the unity of virtue, as it occurs e.g. in the *Protag.*, would be identical with that of the One as ultimate Principle of which Aristotle speaks in *Metaph.* A 6. Yet, must not that testimony work as a "hermeneutic principle" for our interpretation of the earlier dialogues?—For Gadamer at least it does. That is how he comes to think, as Krämer did, that in fact the notion of the unity of virtue, advocated by Plato's Socrates in the Socratic dialogues, "points to the arithmos-structure of the Logos" and to "the One" as ultimate Principle in a meta-mathematical sense.

This is, no doubt, an interpretation. I think the historical Socrates was so much interested in the unity of virtue for another reason than Gadamer is. Plato's Socrates, and Xenophon's as well, was interested in

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[57] Reference is made to Gaiser's earlier-mentioned essay (n. 32 above) on *Protreptik und Paraenese* (Heidelberg 1955, [2]1959).

[58] In the English tradition we found the *Parm.* evaluated in that sense by Burnet, and after him it has been understood as a real "turning-point"—the term I used myself in the title of my dissertation (1936)—from Gilbert Ryle's article on the *Parm.* (Mind 1939) on to G. E. L. Owen and many others in the school of Wittgenstein. L. Campbell must be mentioned, if not as the ἀρχηγός, yet as important representative of the "keerpunt" thesis.

the unity of virtue because he wished to define it by knowledge. That was his primary interest, the unity only a secondary. For Gadamer unity ranks first, and that because the unit is at the origin of number. This is obviously not Socratic, and I do not see we have any ground to suppose it present in, or even behind, the Socratic dialogues. One can only suppose it ἐξ ὑποθέσεως. It is apparently Gadamer's approach, as it was Krämer's and will be found to be Findlay's.

But there is more than unity. There is also "the two". Gadamer wants to posit that for Plato, from the beginning, the problem of multiplicity was the problem of "twoness". As a proof he refers to *Hipp.Mai.* 300ff. This is another remarkable example of reading Plato ἐξ ὑποθέσεως. Different units may fall under a common number, and there is nothing unreasonable in that. It points to "the arithmos-structure of the logos". Participating of one Idea does not yet constitute knowledge. "That which makes knowledge is only understood if one also understands how one and one make two, and how the two are one."

The problem of the relation of two and one occurs frequently in Plato, and early. Gadamer mentions the *Phaedo* (about how "two" come to be), but also *Rep.* 524bc. Neither of these dialogues can be called particularly early, though of course they are not "late". The passage in the *Rep.* gives the example of two fingers: each of them is one, while together they are two. Could that perhaps point to the structure of the two-unit which is later called the Great-and-Small or "more-and-less"? Gadamer remarks: for Plato the relativity of sense-perception implies from the beginning all that which later is explicited as participation of the Ideas of one-another, and their relation to the arithmos-model, which we call "the doctrine of ideal Numbers". Thus in the *Parm.* there is in the One the transition into the other. *Multiplicity is 'the other'*, but not an unlimited multiplicity. It is a multiplicity in which units can be distinguished: the Ideas.

I am afraid there is a certain confusion in the above-cited argument. Certainly, in the *Parm.* if the hypothesis of "the One" is taken in the relative sense, "one" including the ὄν, it leads to a multiplicity of predicates, in which "units" can be distinguished. But, if this be the multiplicity of the Ideas, these are not referred to (in the second deduction) as τὰ ἄλλα. It is only after the multiplicity of thinking-forms has been acquired by the relative thesis, that the consequences with regard to "the other things" are worked out. And these "other things" are, I think, not the Ideas.

We cannot follow Gadamer in every respect. He may be right of course in finding the arithmos-structure of the logos "implied" in Plato's earlier thought. Findlay reads Plato in a similar way. A rather

sober objection, made by many opponents (to whom I may reckon myself), will always be that that which is "implied" in the earlier writings of a philosopher and is later found to be "explicited", was most probably not conscious to his mind in that earlier period, and therefore should rather not be attributed to him in his beginnings. Another, still more important point to be noticed is: that starting with "logos" is a modern approach. It is not Plato's. For Plato, *Reality* (the ὄν) was primary, logos—human thinking on Reality—was secondary.

K. Gaiser, *Platon's ungeschriebene Lehre*, Stuttgart 1963, ²1968

Though Gaiser started in 1955 by a treatise on the protreptic character of the dialogues of Plato and tended to consider Plato's written work as "introductory", suggesting that it was not properly speaking his philosophical teaching, he is handling the testimonies on the unwritten doctrine with much greater caution than was done before by H. Gomperz and in his own surroundings by H. J. Krämer. In an "Anhang" he gives a collection of the relevant texts. His reflections on that material center first on the doctrine on the soul, which is found in the *Tim.* (35aff.), but is also referred to in Arist. *De anima* 404b16ff. The soul has an intermediate place in the whole of Reality. What does it mean that it is said to be compounded by two abstract principles, and that it bears mathematical features? Gaiser takes an excellent start for his reflections by beginning here. Certainly, here we find a basis to reflect on the mathematical structure of Being, which is so to speak reflected in the Soul. Numbers and geometrical figures appear to be its "model".

Which numbers, might one ask? Is it the Ideal Numbers we have to think of, or just mathematical number? The *De anima* passage says that the soul has the same structure as the Ideal World. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 are the types for the structure of being and for the derivation of the lower levels from the higher. In every following member of the series a dimension is added, and the series of the indivisible—the line, the plane figure, the stereometric body—symbolize the four kinds of knowledge. Certainly, the soul is not of the noetic level of Being. It occupies an intermediate place between the noetic and the sensible world. So the "mathematicals" do. There is no identity, but there is similarity. The soul exhibits in its structure the same distinctions, relations and proportions that exist in the realm of mathematics.

Plato did not say that the soul is a number. In the *Tim.* he speaks of the World-soul as extending throughout the world-body and holding the world-body in its enclosing presence. Thus, Speusippus' definition of the soul which implied an extension appears to be closer to Plato's conception than Xenocrates' definition of the soul as a self-moving number.

In his elaborate study "Quellenkritische Probleme der indirekten Überlieferung", which was his contribution to the Heidelberg Plato Colloquy of 1967[59], Gaiser treats once more of the *De anima* passage and on certain problems implied in Aristotle's testimony on Ideas and Numbers. Cherniss' thesis that the *De anima* passage does not refer to Plato's doctrine but to Xenocrates, was shared not only by Vlastos (1963) but also by Theiler (1959-1964)[60], and more recently by E. Dönt[61]. Gaiser checks the arguments and proves that the Xenocrates thesis does not hold.

A close study of the *Timaeus* reveals how much Plato in his cosmology and theory of the structure of the sensible world owed to the great mathematicians of his time. Their discoveries were in a high degree relevant to his understanding of the structures of being, that is in the working of the First Principles on different levels.

However, Gaiser does not confine himself to cosmology, physics and the structure of the soul, including the human soul and body. He also deals with history. The myth of the *Politicus* shows how the ultimate Principles work out in the history of civilization, in which periods of ascent alternate with periods of decline, due to either the ruling presence of the First Principle or its giving way to the form-dissolving force of the second.

In his "Nachwort" to the second edition Gaiser explains himself on a number of controversial points. He speaks of "esoteric doctrine" without any connotation of secrecy. But it must have been so, so he thinks, that the analysis of the structure of reality on its various levels, as was practised by Plato, both in logical and mathematical terms, was too difficult and too abstract to be treated in a literary form and for a larger audience. It presupposed a long intellectual training and could be followed in its consequences only by those who had passed through the preparative studies of the sciences. Further, it was not a matter of simple communication to others. It required an intense and very personal intellectual activity, a "grasping" of the noetic object which is frequently not reached at all[62].

Why did Plato not expound his theory of the First Principles in any written work? Gaiser thinks this has to do with the above-mentioned dif-

[59] *Idee und Zahl*, Heidelberg 1968, 31-84 (cf. n. 45 above).

[60] "Einheit und Unbegrenzte Zweiheit von Plato bis Plotin", in *Isonomia*, hrsg. v. J. Mau u. E. G. Schmidt, Berlin 1964, 89-109.

[61] E. Dönt, *Platons Spätphilosophie u. die Akademie*, Wien 1967, see above n. 37.

[62] In the section "Die innere Aneignung" of the 'Nachwort' (*Pl.u.L.*, 2nd ed., 581-84) Gaiser replies in particular to K. von Fritz, *Phronesis* 11, 1966, (above, n. 29) 117-153.

ficulties. Plato may have been afraid of misunderstanding: it might have been taken in a doctrinary form, as a scheme[63], such as very indirectly has come down to us from Hermodorus in Simplicius, and through other intermediaries in Sextus Empiricus.

Gaiser in 1968

In his "Quellenkritische Probleme" which must have been written about the same date as the "Nachwort"[64], Gaiser expresses himself somewhat more categorically and declares: "As appears from the *Seventh Letter*, Plato avoided noting down his basic doctrines, above all for this reason, that by being written down they would be detached from the living connection with oral dialectic. In that isolation they lead to misunderstanding and error,—anyhow in the case they will be spread outside the school."

In explaining himself Gaiser comes to two highly remarkable judgments.

(1) When considering the "crusty appearance" of a scheme such as Sextus offers us—I note: if by the "scheme" of Sextus reference is made to the section M. X 263-276, which offers a parallel to Hermodorus' scheme, it must be noticed that Sextus' record is not that much "crustier" than Hermodorus's; of course there are a few later terms in Sextus' text, but for Gaiser the essence of the crustiness is rather in the dogmatic character of the report, I guess—well then, in considering that "crusty appearance" Gaiser asks: Do we really learn something about Plato's living thought from such a rather fossilized summary? To this question Gaiser replies in the positive. But he does so under a strict condition, saying: Yes, we do,—provided that we fill the skeleton with the flesh and blood of the living discussions—apparently in the school ("bei der mündlichen Erörterung"). But that is, for us, an X.....

How then have we to fill up the skeleton?

Gaiser ('Nachwort' 586): "With the living discussions *in the dialogues*."

We notice: So here the dialogues—the first and lowest stage of the teaching in the Academy, according to H. J. Krämer, and of an introductory character, protreptic and paraenetic according to K. Gaiser—those dialogues turn out to be the living thought of Plato,

[63] Nachwort 584: "durch die Schrift droht das über die Prinzipien Gesagte, in isolierter Form verbreitet, also aus dem lebendigen Zusammenhang der dialektischen Mündlichkeit herausgelöst zu werden, *ohne den es weder Sinn noch Wert hat.*" That is saying much indeed. Gaiser 585/6 also quotes H. G. Gadamer, *Dialektik und Sophistik im siebenten platonischen Brief*, S. B. Heidelberg, phil.-hist. Kl. 1964, 2, 31.

[64] In: *Idee und Zahl*, 1968, 81.

without which the schemes of Hermodorus and Sextus remain a dead skeleton which we could hardly bring back to life.

This is surprising indeed. Apparently Gaiser is following the good advice of K. von Fritz, "to fill up the schemes as far as possible with the help of the dialogues"[65]. Gaiser comments: If well interpreted, the dialogues and the unwritten doctrine of the indirect tradition can clarify each other ('Nachwort' 586). He goes further in granting that "for us" the dialogues are indispensible to understand anything of the meaning of the doctrine of the First Principles. In abstract terms this is called "der methodische Vorrang der Dialoge" (587). More concretely: "Only through Plato's literary works with their whole wealth of problems and observations the 'skeleton' of the systematic doctrine of First Principles comes to take its living form at all. The dialogues show us how the structure formulas of the theory of First Principles work, and what those axioms bring in for explaining the human world." We are far from H. J. Krämer here, so it might seem.

(2) "Proving that there exist two ultimate Principles is in itself of little value".—Really? That is an amazing verdict. Krämer spoke very differently about that theory. He emphasized the ontological character of the doctrine: it is a 'Seinslehre'. Making sure that all things can be reduced to two ultimate Principles was "proving their existence". And how could that be said to be a matter of slight interest? Krämer, in holding that the doctrine of First Principles was Plato's "true philosophy", much more so than the hypothesis of the Ideas, does seem to be far from Gaiser[66]. And so was Heinrich Gomperz. We shall hear Findlay speaking in a similar way. The reduction of all things to two, and emphatically two ultimate Principles seemed to the former, both the Viennese and the Tübingen scholar, a matter of extreme importance. As for Findlay, he understands the doctrine in a monist sense. For the rest, he too attaches the greatest value to it: by that doctrine Plato was a great philosopher, not so if he had been just that which he is usually believed to have been.

Does Gaiser abandon their view? Does he, after all, find Plato's "living thought" in the written dialogues, more than in the unwritten doctrine?—No doubt, he will decline the alternative. Saying that the dialogues have "methodical priority" is not declaring them to be Plato's "true philosophy", at least not in themselves. Something like a new dimension, a key to the interpretation of the dialogues has to be added.

[65] "mit Hilfe der Dialoge die Schematismen so weit als möglich auszufüllen". In: "Zur Frage der 'esoterischen' Philosophie Platons", in *Archiv f. Geschichte der Philos.*, 49, 1967. Quoted by Gaiser, Nachtrag 587, n. 1.

[66] Gaiser, Quellenkritische Probleme, in *Idee u. Zahl*, 82.

We have to look, so to speak, 'behind' them. That is what the indirect tradition permits us to do. And that is why that tradition really completes our knowledge about Plato, giving us a deeper understanding of that which he really meant.

Some explanation is needed, as will appear from the following.

(1) Gaiser, 'Nachwort' 586, concedes that with the dialogues, if one takes actually part in their thinking movement, one is already finding oneself "on the way of Dialectic",—to which he adds: (a way) which at the end leads to knowledge of "die Sache selbst".

(2) Gaiser, *Quellenkrit. Probl.* 81, rejects the dogmatical character of the record of the unwritten doctrines as "methodically non Platonic", but thinks such a dogmatical record can be understood in a non-dogmatical sense, to wit "*as a dialectical or hypothetical inquiry*". In that sense, so he says, we can connect them organically with the intentions of Plato's written works.

Gaiser leaves us with two difficulties. First, his usage of language is unnatural, when he speaks of "strictly and simply proving" the existence of those Principles and moreover declares that existence not to be that interesting 'in itself'. 'Principles' are never 'just existing'. A principle is always a principle 'of something'. Hence, it makes no sense to speak of the existence of those principles 'in itself' and oppose it to their working. And can it be said that the records of the unwritten doctrine would have treated those principles as if they were unrelational?

Next, what does in the present case "strikt und einfach beweisen" mean? The existence of those principles can only be proved by the analysis of that which depends on them. And that is what Gaiser does think interesting, but probably he would not speak there of "strikt und einfach beweisen". Who would do so? It is an unnatural usage of language.

My other difficulty concerns the method of hypothesis known to us e.g. from *Phaedo* 100aff. Ideas are assumed as a ground laid down for explaining the phenomena. Gaiser wishes to take the First Principles in that sense: they work through in the world of phenomena. They serve to explain its structure. That is in Gaiser's view their "hypothetical character", analogical to that of the Ideas.—Here the following problem arises.

Plato described the method of dialectic as not taking the hypotheses as ἀρχαί, but truly as 'hypotheses', that is, as means to ascend to a higher, more embracing hypothesis, which again may serve to reach a more embracing one, until the ἀνυπόθετον is reached, the absolute 'ground' which is the ἀρχή. Next, starting from the ἀρχή, noetic thought has to descend along the scale of succeeding steps, and by means of subsequent eidetic forms come to an insight in the structure of reality, down to the phenomena. For it is these that have to be 'saved'.

For Plato the ascent has to go up to an ἀνυπόθετον, which is in the full sense ἀρχή. Now what to think about those "ultimate Principles" all things can be reduced to according to the "unwritten doctrine"? Are they "the absolute ground" which alone can be called the ἀρχή?

Krämer, indeed, understood them in that sense. To him "the One" is actually the First Principle, the ἀνυπόθετον of *Rep.* 511b, which was identical with the *Agathon*, as the *Agathon* was with the One. The Second Principle was supposed to be necessarily linked up with the First. Whether or not we are able to follow him, this much is clear: Krämer takes the doctrine of two ultimate Principles to be the top of Plato's ontology.

Does Gaiser agree? No, he is clearly at variance with Krämer by declaring that, after all, the doctrine of First Principles was "just a hypothetical project", viz. a hypothesis on behalf of the explanation of "our world". As Gaiser has shown, the two Principles could serve to explain a good deal of the problems concerning "the structure of reality". But at the end, they turn out to be insufficient to explain the existence of the world. For if they are conceived as equally strong, working simultaneously, then the problem arises that it cannot be explained that a world came into being ....

A highly interesting statement, indeed. Gaiser replies to it by saying that the theory of the two Principles was "just a hypothetical project"[67]. One might draw other conclusions from the same fact. E.g. that perhaps—or even probably—Plato did not mean at all to assert that the Second Principle was 'equal to' and of the same level as the First. Or one might put it so, that those two Principles were probably conceived as working at lower levels of being, while the First alone had its character of transcendency to all kinds of being. Finally, granting for argument's sake that the two Principles doctrine in its dualistic form was truly Platonic, and moreover, that it was meant as a hypothetic project, one might ask: would not the insufficiency of the hypothesis have been the reason why Plato never wrote it down?

By the former interpretation we would correct the records of the indirect tradition on the basis of Plato's authentic text in *Rep.* VI 508e-509c, in the latter we would find ourselves in the company of more than one illustrious earlier scholar, such as J. Burnet, whose opinion is shared by several contemporary Platonists.

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[67] "Diese Lehre war nur ein hypothetischer Entwurf". Gaiser, *Pl.u.L.* 198ff.

E. Berti on Gaiser's theory (1964)

With regard to the above-cited pages of Gaiser's work Enrico Berti made a few interesting remarks[68]. To Gaiser's statement that the hypothesis of the two Principles cannot give a complete explanation of the world he replies: The existence of the world cannot be 'deduced' from any necessary principles. It is a contingent fact. But the real problem is that two equal Principles cannot exist. After all, just one Principle can be a real ἀρχή.

The first remark is made from a Christian theist point of view, the latter is a philosophical truth which can be understood on purely rational grounds. This much is true, that for explaining the world's "structure" at least two principles are needed, as Aristotle argued against the Eleatics[69].

When speaking of Plato's successors Gaiser remarks that Aristotle replaced Plato's doctrine of two ultimate principles by the unity of the Unmoved Mover. (An unfounded monotheistic interpretation of the Prime Mover, by the way. deV.) Gaiser comments: By that doctrine Aristotle abandoned the idea of deducing the world from transcendent Principles.—To which Berti replies: But with the Principles Transcendency is not abandoned! On the contrary, that can only be held in this way, viz. by recognizing the Prime Mover as an efficient Cause. By that doctrine, which Berti attributes to Aristotle and even to Plato in the *Timaeus*, transcendency is 'saved'. Thus, both Plato and Aristotle stand against the tradition of the two Principles doctrine, which fatally leads to immanentism. Neoplatonism actually ends in that: the world derives necessarily from the Principles. Till here E. Berti.

The argument is an interesting example of a too easily constructed scheme. First, that Aristotle's Prime Mover was conceived not only as a final, but also as an efficient cause, is a theist interpretation which, anyway, cannot be founded on the description of the Prime Mover's thinking life, as it is given in *Metaph.* Λ 7 and summarized in two lines of Λ 9[70]. In those lines it is said that absolute Thinking has as its object "that which is absolutely best". Any other object but Himself is strictly excluded. How then could we attribute something like a creative activity to that Prime Mover?

There are other texts of Aristotle. There is the final ch. of *Metaph.* Λ

[68] "Una nueva ricostruzione delle dottrine non scritte di Platone", in: *Giornale di Metafys.* 19 (1964), p. 546-557. German transl. in: Wippern, *Ungeschr. Lehre*, 1972, 240-258. Berti took the subject up in 1977 and 1983. See my ch. IV, *infra*.

[69] *Phys.* I c. 2ff.; *Phys.* I 5: two opposite principles are needed; cc. 6-7: a third one is needed to explain the process of Becoming.

[70] Arist., *Metaph.* Λ 7, 1072b14-30, in particular 18-19, and Λ 9, 1074b33-35.

with the impressive formula "πάντα πρὸς ἓν τέτακται", illustrated by the simile of the well-ordered house[71]. How have we to explain them after the above-cited passages? No doubt the cosmic order exists and is "directed towards unity". But the well-ordered house is, after all, an immanent order which, scientifically speaking, could be explained by impersonal principles.

As for Plato in the *Timaeus*, Gaiser[72] explained the Demiurge as "the dynamic aspect of the Idea(s)". Berti: That is doing violence to the text. The Demiurge is an efficient cause, clearly distinguished by Plato from the formal cause (the Ideas).

To him this is a matter of importance, for the transcendency of "god" depends on it. Which god? one is inclined to ask. For certainly, Gaiser is right in ranking the Demiurge on the level of noetic Being. No doubt for Plato noetic Being was a θεῖον. But it was not the Supreme Principle or the ultimate Cause. Therefore, I think, Gaiser has found a fairly good expression of that which Plato meant by the Demiurge. In this case Berti is rather duped by the mythologizing form which Plato consciously gave to his account of the genesis of the world in the *Timaeus*.

If then these two pillars fall down, Berti's metaphysico-theological construction does not hold. No doubt "transcendency" is saved, and much more than the Padovan scholar supposes. It is saved by the hypothesis of Plato's Ideas in the sense he gave it. It is only deepened by a right understanding of the First Principle which, after all, was clearly taught by Plato in *Rep.* VI-VII. A critical reflection on how that philosopher can have meant the two Principles theory, has to take its basis here.

About Plotinus' Neoplatonism there cannot be any doubt: this metaphysic is not a dualistic system. It is a monism of a thoroughly Platonic stamp[73]. Neither did it lose anything of its transcendentalist signature in the form Iamblichus and Proclus gave it. This much can be said: wherever any later form of *so-called* Neoplatonism is found in which the trancendent Being of the noetic realm and the transcendency of its ultimate cause is no longer understood, but has been substituted by some kind of immanentism, the basis of Platonism has been abandoned. The essential feature of Plato's philosophy is no longer there[74].

[71] *Metaph.* Λ 10, 1075a16-23.

[72] *Pl.u.L.* 193ff.

[73] For a detailed account I may refer to ch. XVII in my vol. *Philosophia*, Part. I: "The monism of Plotinus".

[74] *Infra*, ch. IV. See also my article, "Platonism and Christianity: a mere antagonism or a profound common ground? To the memory of Heinrich Dörrie", in: *Vig. Chr.* 39 (1985), 1-62, the section "Following the East Christian line", in particular the pages on Dionysius Areop. and his translator Scotus Eriugena.

We have to leave Gaiser and his interesting work. But not without one remark. He follows Burkert in holding that Plato was the first to make of mathematics a science. Hence it is said to have been Plato's "discovery" that mathematics is the indispensable tool for coming to an understanding of the structure of the universe. Now certainly, this is what Plato worked out with the help of the great discoveries of the mathematicians of his time. However, the principle itself that Number is our leading instrument to knowledge was a *Pythagorean* principle, and one that must reach back to the beginnings of that school. In the time before Plato and his early years it had reached a considerable development. Gaiser knows that, of course, very well. Only he is not very fair towards those very beginnings of science, when discarding them completely and counting as "science" only the more abstract methods of a later stage. It is true, of course, that the early Pythagoreans represented numbers as figures and that for them geometrical figures were bound up with space. Plato's mathematical thought was more abstract, and very consciously so. None the less, it is no more than doing justice to the early Pythagoreans, and most probably to the founder of their school, to grant that the discovery of Number as a fundamental principle of knowledge was theirs, or rather his[75].

Van der Waerden, *Die Pythagoreer (1979)*

Here I have good reasons to abandon the chronological order of my account and remember the recent work of the Zürich mathematician B. L. van der Waerden, *Die Pythagoreer* (1979)[76]. A considerable part of this work is consecrated to an elaborate account of early Pythagorean mathematics. Certainly, it is by no means the first time for the author to expound his views on this topic: he can go back to a series of articles of some thirty or more years earlier[77]. Moreover, the classical scholar may know those views from the rather condensed article in Pauly-Wiss., Suppl. X. However, the new work adds a great deal to the author's earlier publications and will no doubt be of a great help to arrive at a better understanding, in particular of what must be called the scientific

[75] Gaiser on Pythagorean and Platonic number theories at the end of his "Quellenkr. Probleme", *Idee u. Zahl* (1968), 84. On Plato's 'mathematische Denkformen' and modern science of nature, 'Nachwort', 590.
On the preplatonic character of Pythagorean theory of number, see my comments on the Philolaus-fragments, in *Philosophia*, part I, 1970, ch. II in particular pp. 31-35 (Comm. on fr. 1 and 2) and 75, 3ième question. On Plato and Pythagoreanism, Chap. VIII of my *Pythagoras and Early Pythagoreanism*, 1966, espec. 194f., 200-202.

[76] Artemis Verlag, Zürich-München.

[77] They are mentioned in n. 104 of the above-cited work.

character of early Pythagorean mathematics. After Van der Waerden's clear and precise descriptions of Pythagorean geometry, harmonics, arithmetic and astronomy, in particular after pp. 402-5, which deal with the method which the Pythagoreans discovered for arriving at as exact as possible a calculation of the proportion of the sides of a square to the diagonal, and again pp. 420-23, concerning the two algorithms, discovered by an anonymus 5th-cent. Pythagorean, before 430, it will be no longer possible to deny the existence of a pre-Platonic Pythagorean mathematics in the sense of an exact science.

This is, I think, the highly important upshot of Van der Waerden's *opus magnum*. I think it much more important than his suggestion that the notion of a Demiurge who created the world according to an arithmetical pattern might have been borrowed from Iran. Had he suggested that *Plato* might have been inspired either by Zoroaster or by some preceding Babylonian or Iranian philosophy, though this would not have been an original thesis, it would not have been a completely impossible one. However, what he suggests is: that *Pythagoras* would have adopted that piece of Iranian metaphysics[78]. Now certainly this does not add to the plausibility of the suggestion. On the contrary, there are, I think, decisive arguments against it. However, since even Gadamer seems to be more or less impressed by it[79], it appears to the point to mention the counter-arguments that should be considered.

1. In Nicomachus, *Isag.* I 4, V.d.W. finds the thought that the god who created the world must have had mathematics present to his mind. Why? Because the knowledge of Number is basic for any kind of knowledge. This way of thinking is lacking in Plato, V.d.W. thinks.—Is it really? True, Plato does not say that the Demiurge has Number within his mind. He says that the Demiurge is "looking to the heavenly pattern of the Ideas". Remembering Augustine, who in his *De Magistro* spoke of "consulting the Magister interior", we might perhaps think that such an expression does not exclude that the Demiurge beholds the numerical pattern in his own mind. But V.d.W., not unlike a whole number of "literally" reading philologists, clearly has the impression that Plato's Demiurge follows a pattern outside his mind. The remarkable result is, that Plato's Demiurge creates Soul and the visible world *according to a numerical pattern*.

How can V.d.W. say[80] that, though Plato did think arithmetic to be the first and basic science, he did not connect this thought with his myth

[78] *O.c.*, 299-319.

[79] *Philos. Rundschau* 1981, 140-45.

[80] *O.c.* 302.

of creation? "The Demiurge works looking to the Ideas". Yes, and in doing so he works mathematically. Soul is structured according to the numerical ratios of harmonic, and the structure of the visible world is a geometrical structure. What then was the "pattern" the Demiurge was following like? Apparently it was a numerical pattern.

That is to say, there appears to have been no difference between the pattern Nicomachus' creating god was following and that which Plato's Demiurge was looking to. In this matter no difference of opinion is possible: Plato's Demiurge is operating according to a numerical pattern. Ὁ θεὸς ἀεὶ γεωμετρεῖ. Though the formula has come to us by a comparatively late source, it truly renders Plato's view of the work of creation.

Plato used symbolic language. No doubt, he did so on purpose. I think it wise, not to press him on points that remain so to speak covered by a veil. A veil is over the figure of the Demiurge. This much, however, is clear: the Demiurge was a transcendent Noûs. And what about the "heavenly example"? It seemed to be outside the mind of the Demiurge. This much, however, is clear: it was a numerical pattern, and of the noetic level.

Did V.d.W. not remember Aristotle's repeated testimony that Plato identified his Ideas with Numbers? Elsewhere he is so careful about Aristotle's testimony concerning Plato and the Pythagoreans. In the present case, no doubt, we run the risk of misunderstanding Plato totally, if we just go on to oppose the Demiurge's "heavenly pattern" to a numerical pattern such as Nicomachus' god had "within" his mind.

2. Nicomachus lived in the second century. The notion of a creating god who has either "ideas" or numbers in his mind (both terms occur), is not unusual in those days. After Philo, who had a theist concept of God and reflected on it in Platonic and Stoic terms and notions, we find it in a testimony of Varro, cited in Augustine's *De civ.Dei*, and in one of Seneca's letters[81]; we also find it in Albinus[82]. The notion of a divine Mind working in the universe was familiar both to Stoic and to Platonic thought, though in a different sense in the two cases. For both parties the idea of a divine mind containing exemplary forms or numbers fitted rather well into their notion of the divine. Thus, Nicomachus' version of the creating God does not appear exceptional in the framework of second-century metaphysical thought. Certainly it was not alien to the then prevailing Platonism. It must be noticed, however, that in the form we find in Nicomachus it was rather a late development, both in the Stoa

[81] Both testimonies are quoted in my *Gr. Phil.* III, under 1326b.
[82] Didask. c. 9; in my *Gr.Phil.* nr. 1326b.

and in Platonism. Why? Because it somehow presupposes a theist concept of God.

3. Is there any indication that such a concept was held by the founder of the Pythagorean school, Pythagoras of Samos? Does early Pythagoreanism show any sign of such a conception? On the contrary. Pythagoras must have been a very religious man indeed. He must have been constantly inspired by a feeling of awe and reverence for the Divine. However, there is not the slightest indication that he would have fostered the thought of a God such as V.d.W. ascribes to him. No doubt he considered Number to be a principle that rules the universe; moreover, he regarded it as a θεῖον. From these data *we* may infer that, at least implicitly, he thought of God as a divine Mind that thinks mathematically and thus could be said to have Number within itself. That is then an inference of ours. As a matter of fact, what we hear about the early Pythagoreans is not that they conceived of the Divine in a theist sense, but, looking to the cosmic order, they came to absolutize Number and declared it to be a divine Principle, indwelling in the cosmos. This is so impersonal and so immanentist a view, that I think a formula such as is used by Nicomachus was alien to their mind. Nothing more than the conception of Number as the divine principle of cosmic order may be ascribed to the founder of the school.

4. Elsewhere[83], I noticed as the persistent difference between Plato and Pythagoreanism: that the former's concept of either Ideas or ideal Numbers was marked by its transcendent character, whereas the Pythagorean concept of Number and the Divine always remained that of an indwelling cosmic principle. Thus, Nicomachus' thought of God as a divine Mind, thinking mathematically, must be said to be more essentially Platonic than Pythagorean.

5. By ascribing notably the concept of a Demiurge creating the world after a numerical scheme to Pythagoras, V.d.W. makes the impression of committing an enormous anachronism. No doubt he will say, this might seem so to those who only consider the world of Greek philosophy and Greek religious thought; Pythagoras, however, was a disciple of Babylonian mathematicians, and in that oriental world he may have learned the notion of a Demiurge-God from the Persian Zoroaster. To which we can only reply that such a notion nowhere appears in Pythagorean thought before the *Timaeus* of Plato.

Generally speaking I think that the question of dependence in philosophy is not as simple as V.d.W. supposes it to be. For him the question is only: Did a certain concept or theory occur somewhere earlier

[83] *Pythagoras and Early Pythagoreanism*, ch. VIII.

in history? If it appears in fact to have occurred somewhere, then for him the matter is settled: there must be dependence of the later on the earlier conception. This is, so he thinks, a general rule: great inventions were made only once in history. This applies to philosophy as well. Now Plato, reflecting on human knowledge and the ever-changing phenomena of the sensible world, came to assume the hypothesis of transcendent Ideas. In Babylon, however, a philosophy existed at an earlier date in which two kinds of being were assumed, one of them transcendent and purely noetic, the other that of sensible things. The latter were preceded by the former. These were the archetypal pattern of sensible reality. This kind of metaphysics existed in Iran in Zoroaster's days. He did not invent it, but he used it in his myth of creation. Whether or not Pythagoras adopted this view—which seems extremely doubtful, since no early Pythagorean text testifies to it nor does anything of the kind seem to have been known by Aristotle—Plato at any rate taught a similar doctrine. If then V.d.W.'s rule of dependence must be applied, what else can we conclude than that obviously Plato adopted the Iranian theory?

This is, as a matter of fact, what about half a century ago the well-known Hellenist C. W. Vollgraff suggested in an article published not long before the appearance of my Plato work *Een keerpunt in Plato's denken* (1936). He sent the paper to me and I mentioned it in my book without either accepting or declining it. I must confess that in fact I have not been greatly impressed by the suggestion of dependence, though I did acknowledge a remarkable similarity. Vollgraff was a friend and contemporary of Bidez and Méautis, whose works he greatly appreciated. It is remarkable that the ideas that haunted the minds of Greek scholars of that generation are taken up again by Van der Waerden.

What are we to think of contacts between Plato and Babylonian philosophy? First, Plato must have conceived his theory of transcendent Ideas before he came into contact with Eudoxus, who—himself not an admirer of any transcendentalist philosophy—may have told him about the philosophy of Iran. Certainly Plato will have been greatly interested and will have been aware of a common ground. On the other hand, if Eudoxus' report of Zoroastrian doctrine was complete enough, it will not have escaped his attention that the Persian prophet and philosopher differed from him in an important part, namely in so far as he admitted the existence of evil in his noetic and archetypal reality. Such a conception was alien to his own mind and in this he could only mark the difference.

It might be useful to reflect on V.d.W.'s theory of dependence by taking another example. Like many other Greek philosophers[84], Pythagoras

[84] I just remember Democr., fr. 32 D and Epicurus, *Sent. Vatic.* L. I.

appears to have had a highly unfavourable opinion of the aphrodisia. Diog.Laert. VIII 9f. gives a lengthy quotation, made by the 2nd-century Alexandrian librarian Heracleides Lembos from one of the "three books of Pythagoras" he had in hand. He thought these books to be authentic. In the quoted passage Pythagoras declares the practice of the aphrodisia to be harmful to health, since they detract from a person's physical strength. They are, he says, particularly harmful in summer, less so in winter, spring and fall, but they are harmful in any season. Democritus according to his own testimony felt likewise[85]. It was clearly his own experience, not a lesson he had learned from any earlier philosopher.

What is interesting to our present reflection is, that a large number of present-day spiritual leaders and ascetics in India have the same conviction as was expressed by Pythagoras or whichever Pythagorean was the author of the above-mentioned assessment. So much so that among them a Catholic priest will be honoured and accepted as long as he lives in complete sexual abstinence. Married priests would not be equally respected. The underlying conviction is certainly the heritage of a very long tradition. If one would try to trace it back, it would be quite possible that he would find some early Sanskrit text, say of the 7th century B.C., in which precisely that would be expressed which we read in the book of Pythagoras quoted in Diog. Laert. Suppose we would find such an old Indian text, what shall we conclude? That Pythagoras obviously borrowed his wisdom about the aphrodisia from India? That would follow from V.d.W.'s theory of dependence. But the example rather points us in another direction: it teaches us that the same or similar thoughts, theories and principles do not seldom occur in different places of the world, at different times or also at about the same time, independently the ones from the others. The human mind, after all, is not that different, that even in very different peoples the same or similar thoughts might not arise; moreover, the human race is not that limited in its spiritual activity, that such similar thoughts and convictions have not actually occurred in different times and different places. Similarity is far from proving dependence.

This much then on Van der Waerden and the Pythagoreans.

Who is the true Plato? (1968-75)

Not so long after the Heidelberg Plato Colloquy of 1967 I wrote my book *Plato, the Philosopher of the Transcendent* (1968)[86], a book of modest

[85] Cited above.
[86] *Plato, de filosoof van het transcendente*, Baarn 1968, ²1974, ³1983.

in history? If it appears in fact to have occurred somewhere, then for him the matter is settled: there must be dependence of the later on the earlier conception. This is, so he thinks, a general rule: great inventions were made only once in history. This applies to philosophy as well. Now Plato, reflecting on human knowledge and the ever-changing phenomena of the sensible world, came to assume the hypothesis of transcendent Ideas. In Babylon, however, a philosophy existed at an earlier date in which two kinds of being were assumed, one of them transcendent and purely noetic, the other that of sensible things. The latter were preceded by the former. These were the archetypal pattern of sensible reality. This kind of metaphysics existed in Iran in Zoroaster's days. He did not invent it, but he used it in his myth of creation. Whether or not Pythagoras adopted this view—which seems extremely doubtful, since no early Pythagorean text testifies to it nor does anything of the kind seem to have been known by Aristotle—Plato at any rate taught a similar doctrine. If then V.d.W.'s rule of dependence must be applied, what else can we conclude than that obviously Plato adopted the Iranian theory?

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What are we to think of contacts between Plato and Babylonian philosophy? First, Plato must have conceived his theory of transcendent Ideas before he came into contact with Eudoxus, who—himself not an admirer of any transcendentalist philosophy—may have told him about the philosophy of Iran. Certainly Plato will have been greatly interested and will have been aware of a common ground. On the other hand, if Eudoxus' report of Zoroastrian doctrine was complete enough, it will not have escaped his attention that the Persian prophet and philosopher differed from him in an important part, namely in so far as he admitted the existence of evil in his noetic and archetypal reality. Such a conception was alien to his own mind and in this he could only mark the difference.

It might be useful to reflect on V.d.W.'s theory of dependence by taking another example. Like many other Greek philosophers[84], Pythagoras

[84] I just remember Democr., fr. 32 D and Epicurus, *Sent. Vatic.* L. I.

appears to have had a highly unfavourable opinion of the aphrodisia. Diog.Laert. VIII 9f. gives a lengthy quotation, made by the 2nd-century Alexandrian librarian Heracleides Lembos from one of the "three books of Pythagoras" he had in hand. He thought these books to be authentic. In the quoted passage Pythagoras declares the practice of the aphrodisia to be harmful to health, since they detract from a person's physical strength. They are, he says, particularly harmful in summer, less so in winter, spring and fall, but they are harmful in any season. Democritus according to his own testimony felt likewise[85]. It was clearly his own experience, not a lesson he had learned from any earlier philosopher.

What is interesting to our present reflection is, that a large number of present-day spiritual leaders and ascetics in India have the same conviction as was expressed by Pythagoras or whichever Pythagorean was the author of the above-mentioned assessment. So much so that among them a Catholic priest will be honoured and accepted as long as he lives in complete sexual abstinence. Married priests would not be equally respected. The underlying conviction is certainly the heritage of a very long tradition. If one would try to trace it back, it would be quite possible that he would find some early Sanskrit text, say of the 7th century B.C., in which precisely that would be expressed which we read in the book of Pythagoras quoted in Diog. Laert. Suppose we would find such an old Indian text, what shall we conclude? That Pythagoras obviously borrowed his wisdom about the aphrodisia from India? That would follow from V.d.W.'s theory of dependence. But the example rather points us in another direction: it teaches us that the same or similar thoughts, theories and principles do not seldom occur in different places of the world, at different times or also at about the same time, independently the ones from the others. The human mind, after all, is not that different, that even in very different peoples the same or similar thoughts might not arise; moreover, the human race is not that limited in its spiritual activity, that such similar thoughts and convictions have not actually occurred in different times and different places. Similarity is far from proving dependence.

This much then on Van der Waerden and the Pythagoreans.

Who is the true Plato? (*1968-75*)

Not so long after the Heidelberg Plato Colloquy of 1967 I wrote my book *Plato, the Philosopher of the Transcendent* (1968)[86], a book of modest

[85] Cited above.

[86] *Plato, de filosoof van het transcendente*, Baarn 1968, ^{2}1974, ^{3}1983.

proportions. None the less, I had to treat there a whole number of very difficult problems in a very succinct form and give within the framework of some 160 pages a well-founded picture of what the philosopher Plato was like. Of course I could only write that small book by having spent more than forty years in thinking those problems over. The final pages give a picture of the essential of Plato's philosophy which differs very much indeed from either Krämer's or Gaiser's picture of the 'esoteric' Plato.

If one asks: "Which of them is the true Plato?", I am willing to grant to Gaiser that Plato's thoughts moved along different lines. But I am not willing to grant that the author of the *Republic* or of the *Laws* was not essentially the philosopher Plato.

During the Colloquy on Neoplatonism held at Royaumont in June 1969 I spoke on those aspects of Plato's philosophy which, since they involve a metaphysic of different levels of being, must be acknowledged to tend to that later development which is mainly due to Plotinus[87]. Now the tendency of making a gulf between Plato and Neoplatonism, which arose in the first half of the 19th century as a reaction to the existing confusion of the classical doctrine and its later development, cannot yet be said to have been overcome. Zeller's view, which made the gulf as broad and deep as possible, has not yet lost its grip on the mind of a number of classical scholars. They are not willing to grant that Plato definitely placed the One or the Good above intelligible Being, which is caused by it, and, on the whole, tend to deny that for Plato there was any effective causal link between the perfect Being of the Ideas and their imperfect image in sensible things. Though a two-world system is usually ascribed to Plato, while as a matter of fact Soul can hardly be denied to have somehow taken an intermediate place between the ideal and the sensible world, they rather persistently hold that in Plato nothing like a dependence of the inferior on the higher level of being can be found. At Royaumont the persistency of the Zeller-view appeared rather vigorously in some of the senior participants of the conference. Therefore it seemed to me expedient and worthwhile once more to consider the controversial points and to expound my arguments. I did so immediately after the Royaumont meeting. It appeared as ch. IX in my volume *Philosophia, Part I, Studies in Greek philosophy* (1970).

Next, since there was so much talk about "Greek dualism", of which Plato was supposed to be the chief exponent, it seemed to me an urgent need of the times to give some well-founded information on the topic,

[87] "A propos de quelques aspects dits néoplatonisants du platonisme de Platon", in *Le Néoplatonisme* (Colloque de Royaumont 1969), Paris 1971, ed. CNRS, 7-16.

analyzing the whole of Plato's philosophy, his doctrine of being and of knowledge, his anthropology, and lastly his theory of ultimate principles, including the question of whether he admitted some kind of pre-existent matter, "*coaeterna Deo*", as early Christian writers used to say. This essay of some sixty pages, entitled "Was Plato a dualist?", appeared in 1972 in the first number of the periodical *Thêta-Pi*, which in the years 1972-75 gave some more discussions around Plato and Platonism. Since the subject is of a particular interest, both to theology and anthropology, and the paper is not easily available, a revised, and in so far as needed enlarged version of it, will be given in part II, ch. VI of the present volume.

Discussion on the Good

In the volume *Zetesis*, offered to E. de Strycker (Antwerp 1973) I took up the subject of the *Agathon* in the *Republic* of Plato, which he had treated himself at the Congress of the Fédération Internationale de la Philologie Classique at Bonn, 1969. In a remarkably fine exposition he had argued that the Agathon, which is called an "idea", was not as such really placed above intelligible Being, but was considered to be part of it—τοῦ ὄντος τὸ φανότατον (518c) and πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ἀρίστου ἐν τοῖς οὖσι θέαν (532c)—and thus accessible to our intellect, of which it is repeatedly said to be the μέγιστον μάθημα.

Replying to this argument I pointed to the undeniable fact that in 508e Plato, having mentioned knowledge and truth as "both beautiful things", explicitly declares the Idea of Good as their αἰτία to be of a different kind (ἄλλο) and "still more beautiful than these"; to which he adds the simile that, just as in the realm of the visible it is correct to call light and the faculty of seeing "sunlike", but not correct to think them to be the sun itself, thus in the realm of the intelligible it is correct to call knowledge and truth similar to the Good, but not to consider them as equal to it. The Good is to be ranked still higher.

As for the superlatives τοῦ ὄντος τὸ φανότατον and τὸ ἄριστον ἐν τοῖς οὖσι, I remarked that in Greek the genitive that follows after a superlative is not necessarily meant as partitive but may have a comparative sense, just as e.g. in Homer some precious garment is said to lie νείατος ἄλλων.

De Strycker was sensitive to my arguments and thought them convincing. Objections were made by two others, whose writings referring to the matter came only much later into my hands. G. J. de Vries hastened to come to the aid of De Strycker's argument[88]. Passing rather

[88] G. J. de Vries, *Miscellaneous notes on Plato* (Med.Kon.Ned.Akad.Lett., NR 38, 1), Amsterdam 1975, 32-38.

lightheartedly over the ἄλλο, by which Plato clearly distinguished the cause from what is caused by it, de Vries suggests that it would be quite unusual that the οὕτω after διανοοῦ should resume the preceding conditions. The μέν after γιγνωσκομένης, followed by a δέ after οὕτω, are an obstacle to that interpretation, so he thinks. However, there is a certain misunderstanding in his rendering of my text. For in saying that the οὕτω "reprend ce qui précède", I did not refer to the γιγνωσκομένης μέν only, but to the αἰτίαν δέ as well, linking the οὕτω with καλῶν (as de Vries thinks natural) and doing, in fact, what the Jowett-commentators did when saying that the μέν "strictly belongs to αἰτίαν and is opposed to the following δέ". Thus I explained, not otherwise than they did: "You must think that the Idea of Good is the cause of strict knowledge and of Truth which is its object,—and yet, though in that sense (οὕτω) both are beautiful, knowledge and Truth (οὕτω, sc. not only by being knowledge and its object, but also by being caused by the Good), you will be right in holding that the Idea of Good is different and of still greater beauty."

Can it be said that this rendering is unnatural or does violence to the text? Hardly. Or is it such an awkward way of speaking, to say that the Good is the cause of knowledge-in-the-strict-sense and of Truth as its object? The alternative would be that the Good as cause of knowledge and of truth must be itself considered to be the object of knowledge,—a statement which in itself cannot be called a logical inference. Further, it is mitigated by what follows, namely that, though the *causata* both are beautiful, yet the cause is of another kind, and more beautiful than these.

Anyway there is a considerable distance, a difference of level which, even before the word ἐπέκεινα has fallen, must affect the knowability of that principle which is First.

Regarding the superlatives in 518c and 532c, though granting that the superlative is "sometimes" used in a comparative sense, de Vries thinks this does not apply to the present cases. Now if one prefers to take those superlatives in the superlative sense, of course he may do so. Only, that does not affect my argument. For it is quite a usual thing, also in our own language, to express oneself somewhat freely. One may, for instance, say that eternal bliss is "the greatest thing in the world", without meaning by it that the *visio Dei* would be either "a thing" or a part of this our world. What imports is: the clear distinction which Plato himself makes between the *aitia* and what is caused by it, a distinction which results in the emphatic formula ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας. We have to take Plato seriously. In fact, he himself gave a clear answer to a remark such as is made by de Vries, that the ἄλλο in 508e5 need not denote a difference of essence, and since for Plato the nature of the object to be known corresponds with the particular kind of knowledge that applies to it, his

answer includes the question of the knowability: the agathon is ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας, it is therefore not a νοητόν like the other νοητά.

That it would essentially belong to the same order cannot even be inferred from 534b9. In that passage we find the knowledge of the Good described as the proper achievement of dialectic. The philosopher must attain to that knowledge, and he alone does attain to it. "He must be able to distinguish it from all other things." That is what Plato says. I venture to ask: But how can that be done? By a formal definition, per genus et differentiam specifiam? Obviously not. For the Good as the cause of Being does not belong to a genus, but is unique. Philosophers, then, must know it "by isolating it from all other Forms" (Cornford, 1941).

Let us not quarrel about a word. Certainly, the Good is not "isolated" in such a sense that participation would be excluded. But it is "distinguished from" the other νοητά. That is to say, *in a sense* it can be grasped τῷ λόγῳ, not by analyzing it or describing it in a positive way, but just by saying what it is not. Is it too Plotinian to conclude that predicates can only be applied to it with an "as it were", a ὥσπερ, since it is of an order beyond Being?

This question brings me close to my other opponent: Dr. Th. S. Szlezák in his Habilitationsschrift on Plotinus' doctrine of Noûs and the role of both Plato and Aristotle with regard to it[89]. I share his main thesis, namely that Plotinus' philosophy, in particular his doctrine of Noûs, was a development of Plato's philosophy: in Plato Plotinus found the mainlines for his metaphysics, but he had to work them out to come to his theory of the three hypostases. In the simile of the sun the Good is presented as a First Principle: it is the cause of Being and it is beyond Being; moreover, in spite of the transcendency there is a resemblance between the *causatum* and the cause. So far there is perfect agreement between Dr. Sz. and me, and even further. To confine myself to the passage *Rep.* 508e-9b and its implications, I think Dr. Sz. is perfectly right in remarking that Plato did not say anything about the *modus quo* of the causation. Plotinus tried to explain *how* a multiplicity of ὄντα could come forth from the First which is one. Plato seems not to ask that question, at least not in this passage of the *Rep.* In this too, there is no disagreement between Sz. and me. However, he disagrees in taking the γιγνωσκομένης of 508e4 as referring to the idea of Good, and this in a most categorical form. Evidently he also points to 534b8-d2: the knowledge of the Good as the "Höhepunkt" of dialectic. He even holds that in this passage the knowledge of the Good is described as "discur-

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[89] Th. A. Szlezák, *Platon und Aristoteles in der Nuslehre Plotins*, Basel 1979, 61, n. 203.

sive knowledge''. That is to say, he thinks that ''separating it out from all other things'' (ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων πάντων ἀφελών)[90] does not mean ''distinguishing it from the other Ideas'', but just separating it from ''all other things'', including ὁρατά, or perhaps even primarily referring to that larger group of things.

However, this is going against Plato's most elementary distinctions. He makes them, when at Glauco's insistent request his Socrates, rather reluctantly,—for his first reaction was, to declare himself incapable to give the requested account—, comes to offer some explanation. By way of introduction he remembers that in 509d1f. it is said that ''they are two'': the Good ruling the intelligible class of things and their τόπος, while the sun is king of the visible. Then, in ''the divided line'', the basic distinction is made between those two classes of things,—an earlier generation used to speak of ''two realms of being'': in the *Phaedo* Plato's Socrates himself spoke of ''two kinds of beings''[91], the visible kind and the invisible. The philosopher is concerned with the latter, and, according to the description of 510b-11e, even with the most restricted section of it, that of pure intelligibles. By means of these intelligible Forms (''Ideas'') he has to find his way to that ultimate Principle, which here is called the *anhypotheton* and ἀρχὴ τοῦ παντός (510b8f., 511b3-7). That process is not something like ''separating out from visible things''. Far from it. It is an ascent within the ''place'' of intelligibles, ''using the *hypotheses* as stepping-stones'' (511b6f.), the *hypotheses* being *the intelligible Forms*, assumed by the philosopher in order to explain both the existing phenomena and our knowledge of them (*Phaedo* 100-101).

These things, however difficult they may be, are clear enough to think that there will be no obstacle for a scholar such as Dr. Sz. to agree with me on that matter. We could say then that the Agathon, which is the first Principle and ultimate cause—τοῦ παντὸς ἀρχή, ''of all things'', say of the universe, because the visible world depends on primary Being which is the νοητά, and ultimately on the First Principle which is primarily the cause of the νοητά; this Principle, then, is itself a νοητόν, insofar as it is reached by the intellect. However, we should not forget that at the outset of the explanation, given in the divided line, Plato's Socrates remembered that the Good is *the King* of the noetic topos, just as the sun

[90] The formula ''separating it out from all other things'' is taken from Allan Bloom's translation of the *Rep.* (Basic Books, N.Y.-London 1968). The author's approach is somewhat too much ''from below'' to be always adequate. However, we owe him in his Interpretive Essay an excellent comment on ''the lowest level of the line'' (Bloom 403ff.), for which I wish to thank him.

[91] *Phaedo* 79a5: δύο εἴδη τῶν ὄντων.

is the king of the visible. And we may be sure that, even in democratic Athens, a king was not regarded as *primus inter pares*.

Dr. Sz., not satisfied with my paper on ''the Good'' in *Zetesis* (1973), is particularly anxious that I would not have heeded the fact that the sun, too, belongs to the visible world. He alleges two passages, 508b9-10 and 516b4-7. In the first-mentioned lines we read: ''The sun is not sight''—either the faculty or the function of seeing—, ''but its cause. However, while being its cause, it is seen through that very faculty.''

The other one is taken from the description of the released prisoner's experience. ''Last of all'', so it says, ''he will be able to look at the sun and contemplate it, no longer its reflexions in water or images of it occurring elsewhere, but the sun as it is in itself and in its proper site.''

Following the text a few lines further we read: ''And after that, he might come to the conclusion that it is the Sun that produces the seasons and years and, so to speak, supervises all things happening in the visible world'' ...

No doubt, the released prisoner can see the sun. But would really Plato's Socrates have been so naive as to think that he can see the Sun in its true proportions and know its physical constituents and its location in the universe? I can hardly believe that. The historical Socrates, as drawn from life by the tipsy Alcibiades in Plato's *Symposium* (219e-220d), in the camp near Potidaea stood from daybreak over a day and a night, absorbed in thought, until the break of the new day; then, he said a prayer to the rising sun and went away. For him the sun was not just a physical body, it was a divine being, a visible god. So it was for Plato, too. Moreover, the same Socrates had an extremely strict idea of knowledge. Xenophon (*Mem.* I 1,15) tells a delightful story which bears the features of authenticity: Socrates used to ask those philosophers who offered a theory to explain such phenomena as winds and waters and seasons,—which he called ''things divine''—,whether they were also able to reproduce those phenomena whenever they wished, just as able persons can reproduce a toy or any object made for the use of man. Or was it enough for them just to be able to tell by what causes suchlike things occur?

The hidden irony of the question is revealing. We have to remember that Plato gave his explanation of the physical universe—a highly scientific explanation—under the form of a ''probable story'' (εἰκὼς λόγος).

Let us conclude. No doubt, those who remark that the sun is visible are right. Yet, they have to bear in mind that for Plato it was on no account a physical object of the same level as the things depending on it, both in their visibility and in their existence. It is of a superior rank.

Hence, the sun's visibility is not of the same kind as that of any visible

thing: it is something partial and singularly limited. Yet, seeing the sun we are prompted to an inference (516b9: συλλογίζοιτο ἂν περὶ αὐτοῦ), namely, about its operative power: that it is the cause of years and seasons, of things happening in the visible world, and lastly, even of those shadows and images which the prisoners saw in the cave.

Drawing the parallel with the Good we have first to state that on the level of the intelligible the Good is knowable. The philosopher *must* know it. Yet, he will not know it with the same kind of knowledge as the other *noeta.* For it is beyond them. This transcendency certainly limits its knowability. But when the philosopher attains to "see" it (540a),——

What will happen in that case? Is he going to draw an inference about *the operative power* of the Good? That is to say: about the way in which it "works"? Or is he going to speculate about how "the many" come from "the one", and how visible things depend on intelligible ones? That is to say, is he going to tell us *how* all things in the universe and in the visible world depend on the Good? Or, last of all, is he going to describe the "essence" of the Good, that is, formally define it in its very nature?

The "knowledge" of the Sun did not go that far. It was limited to the inference that "all things visible", both atmospherical phenomena and things on earth, depend on it. So it is with the knowledge of the Good: certainly the philosopher must have it—for he must act upon it, using it as a παράδειγμα in governing the state. The life of men, both private and in community, must be ordered according to that pattern, just as the philosopher's own life must be (540b).

That is what Socrates in the *Apol.* called a matter of "obedience to the God" (23b-c, 28b-30a). Plato's "theology"—if one wishes to call it so—in the *Rep.* appears to be at the utmost a *theologia practica, non speculativa.* He will not tell us "was die Welt im innersten zusammenhält". The knowledge of the Good seems to remain particularly restricted. "I shall leave out a great deal", Socrates said at the outset of his nearer explanations (509c).

Yet, the philosopher must "see" the Good—, "for it will provide light on everything" (540a8). The philosopher will have to work with it in the midst of human social life. The *visio Dei* awaits him hereafter, on the Isles of the blessed.

That is what Plato says in the *Republic.*

Plato and Physics

The theme was amply discussed by Fr. Solmsen in his work on Aristotle's physics (1960)[92]. In that work Solmsen considered Plato's

[92] Fr. Solmsen, *Aristotle's System of the Physical World. A comparison with his predecessors,* Ithaca, N.Y. 1960, 20-66.

philosophy from the point of view of *genesis* and movement. He remarked that Plato never shared Parmenides' thesis that coming-to-be should be altogether eliminated from a doctrine of truth. He assumed eternal and unchanging principles beyond becoming and passing away, precisely in order to account for the existence of physical things. Solmsen takes that seriously when stating that in Plato's thought the eternal principles "take their place in a scheme in which coming to be and passing away are firmly established": in Plato's view the universal Forms make genesis possible and keep it going on.

This is quite true. However, in comparing Plato's contribution to the problem of genesis to that of post-Parmenidean Presocratics, though stating that, as a matter of fact, Plato made a new approach to that problem, since his Forms were of an essentially different order from that of "elements" changing into something else or mixing in a compound, Solmsen had the impression that Plato achieved this "accidentally rather than deliberately". No doubt Solmsen thought so because he was convinced that Plato for quite a long period was exclusively interested in moral and political problems and only in a late period of his life came to concentrate his attention on the problems of the physical world.

From his recent contribution to the Swarthmore Symposium of 1977 it may be seen that he still holds the same view[93]: right at the outset of his highly interesting lecture on "Plato and Science" he presents the same picture of Plato's philosophical concerns, declaring that from his earlier exclusively ethical interest the philosopher had gradually moved on to metaphysics and epistemology. Apparently Solmsen thinks that both the *Phaedo* and the *Rep.* belonged to the period of Plato's earlier scope. For in the *Phaedo,* when using the argument of the cycle of opposites, he was not really concerned with the problem of *genesis* in its absolute sense: he considered it to be a matter of getting another attribute; and in the *Rep.* the highest "Form" was a moral principle, the Good. Hence Solmsen's problem: Why should this philosopher in his later years have come to such painstaking and penetrating study of the physical world? For "in Nature good and value had no place".

This is a modern physicist's view. It was, however, not Plato's view of nature, not that of his later years, but not that of his earlier years either. How did his great example, Socrates, look at Nature? Did he leave the study of it because he thought that good and value had no place there? Far from it. He looked at Nature as τὰ θεῖα (the divine things), and was keenly aware of the fact that philosophers of nature, even if they think

[93] Fr. Solmsen, "Plato and Science", in: *Interpretations of Plato.* A Swarthmore Symposium, ed. H. North (Mnemosyne Suppl. 50), Leiden 1977, 86-105.

they can explain physical phenomena, are not able to reproduce them. This is what Xenophon tells us[94], and certainly this was a historical feature[95]. As for Plato, he learned from his highly respected friend Archytas to regard the cosmic order with due respect, as a harmony ruled by numeric ratio[96], a principle which, by virtue of its intelligible character, elevates visible things to a level nobler than they might seem to have by themselves, just as in men and human relationships it creates soundness both of body and mind, establishing justice and moderation, community and mutual love. This is the lesson Plato took home with himself on returning to Athens not so long before he founded the Academy. He certainly never forgot it.

In the *Phaedo* 100a-101d he expounds how he came to his theory of Ideas: it was his way of accounting for phenomena and for our concepts and thoughts about them. He was certainly not exclusively concerned with moral values. His method had a much larger scope. Nor could it be said that he was essentially concerned with mathematical principles. That things are two or four, that they are equal, small or great belongs to his concern as much as that they are fine or ugly, good or bad. It is true that he was not particularly speaking of how things come into being. Yet, probably he was not only concerned with qualities, but with "things" as they are, with ὁρατά as an εἶδος τῶν ὄντων (79a). He asked after their meta-physical ground, because in his conviction this was the only way of really accounting for their existence, including their origin and growth.

About the character of the Good in *Rep.* 508-9 there cannot be any doubt: this was not just the supreme moral principle; it was a metaphysical principle in the ontological sense: all being depends on it, the intelligible immediately and the visible in that it depends on the intelligible. It is true that in the *Rep.* Plato does not enlarge on the problem of *how* the many spring from the one, nor of how visible things come forth from the invisible. In this, however, Plato did more than is reported by Solmsen: he did explicitly reflect on the ontological status of

[94] *Memor.* I, 1,15.

[95] Cf. *Memor.* I 4,4-9, cited in my *Gr.Philos.* I, p. 145, n. 1: Socrates talking with "the little man" Aristodemus who did not believe in the gods, points to "those huge bodies" that move so regularly in the heavens; cf. also Plato, *Symp.* 220d: Socrates in the camp near Potidaea, saying a prayer to the rising sun.

[96] Plato, *Gorg.* 507e-508a. Here the principles of κόσμος and τάξις, mentioned in the preceding pages as constituting the correctness of any human ἔργον (503e-504d), including physical and mental health, is traced back to the cosmic principle of the right proportions, which creates community and friendship (κοινωνία καὶ φιλία) in the heavens and on earth, among gods and men, making the physical universe a *kosmos* and founding justice, propriety and soundness of mind (κοσμιότης and σωφροσύνη) in men and human society. The principle of *geometrical equality* (ἰσότης γεωμετρική) which is mentioned here with a particular emphasis, points undoubtedly to Archytas.

visible things as a kind of being. He approaches the problem from the point of view of knowledge: Of visible things we have a kind of knowledge by perception, which is not able to give an account of its object in rational terms. Yet, it is a kind of knowledge, and it is about some definite object. This cannot be totally exempt from Being. By being a "something" it proves to participate in Being; by not coming up to the standard of reasonable account it proves not to be Being in the full sense, but to participate of Non-being as well. It is a μεταξύ: something between Being and Non-being; "knowable" in a sense but not in the full sense; *doxa*, but not *episteme* (*Rep.* V 477a-478e). This view of the ontological status of visible things appears to have remained with Plato throughout his later years.

In the formula γένεσις εἰς οὐσίαν of *Phil.* 26d Solmsen found confirmed what he thought implied in the theory of Forms: to things that have come into being, the status of being is accorded when the process of becoming is completed. In his earlier work (1960)[97] he found this once more confirmed in *Laws* X 894ab, in which, as he puts it, things that have become are even referred to as ὄντως ὄν. I should like to note to that passage that the Plato-reader will rather not couple here the words ὄντως and ὄν, which in Plato's idiom taken together are the particular attribute of *intelligible* Being; he will rather understand the sentence in this way that the things referred to are said here to be "truly" a being. Which is, no doubt, remarkable, yet does not attribute to those objects the predicate that is special to a higher kind. Solmsen, anyway, is rather disappointed when in the *Timaeus* Plato once more makes all his traditional reservations concerning "things becoming", and, in offering an elaborate theory of the structure of the visible world, he does so under the label of an εἰκὼς μῦθος[98]. In spite of such a "hopeful development" as that of *Soph.* 248e-249c, more than a "likely tale" could not be reached in Plato's own, highly severe assessment of what a system of physics could be.

No doubt Solmsen is fully right in thinking that the new discoveries of contemporary mathematicians were not the only reason for Plato's intense occupation with physics in his later years: there has been a change in his interest resulting from an inner development[99]. Yet, I think his reflections on the ontological status of visible things, noted down in *Rep.* V, rendered indeed what he thought of the "being" of that kind of objects: they were not a non-being, but not a full being either. This must

[97] *Aristotle's System of the Phys. World*, 39.

[98] *Plato and Science*, 89.

[99] My judgment on Plato's "development" will be given *infra*, Ch. II, pp. 59ff.

have been the conviction that is behind his later works too: it accounts both for those passages in which he accords "being" to things that "have become", and for those in which he repeats that no knowledge is possible of ever changing things (*Phil.* 59a-c; *Tim.* 27d5-28a4). As far as they are permanent visible objects may be said to "be" (*Laws* X 894a8-9): they "are" really as long as they remain in the same state; when they change into another condition, however, they have perished and even they have perished completely (διέφθαρται παντελῶς, ibid. 9-10). The lasting predicate of ὄντως ὄν cannot be accorded them, but occasionally they may be called "really" ὄντα, during the time they are in the same state.

Solmsen's exegesis of the *Soph.* passage in which "movement" is introduced into intelligibles (248e-249c), is not altogether satisfactory. He thinks that in this passage "movement" is introduced as an "idea" side by side with the other ideas. It is, so he thinks, a genus-concept, including all kinds of motion. He also describes it as "the common denomination of all cosmic movements". However, what Plato says is not that an "idea" of motion has to be assumed which, side by side with other ideas, has its own sphere of influence, without "affecting" the others. Plato is speaking of the whole of the intelligible world: as a παντελῶς ὄν it can only be conceived as a living being of the highest kind, that is, a thinking living being. For on the level of the intelligible, movement is not local: it is nothing but thinking. Forms are not isolated the one from the other: those which are called "the highest kinds" communicate with all the others. There is interpenetration, some pervading all. Thus, the Forms taken together are "perfect Being", an organic whole. I tried to explain this elsewhere.

Less difficult is the following point. Plato (*Tim.* 47a-c) admired the regular motion of the heavenly bodies. He points to them as an example for man in his thinking and acting. Solmsen remarks: this view of the celestial motions was a complete reversal of the traditional world-view of the Greeks. I think we have to contradict him here. Solmsen goes back to Anaximandros (two centuries before) and to the theories of many worlds advanced by younger physicists. However, one cannot speak of "the Platonic revolution" in cosmology when bearing in mind that Plato's cosmological theory was essentially Pythagorean: it is exactly the conception of numerical proportion ruling the universe and establishing "harmony" which was originally a Pythagorean view. The very notion of *kosmos* was Pythagorean and of an early date; πέρας and ἄπειρον were at the top of their double series of principles which was as old as Alcmaeon of Croton. Certainly, Plato criticized fourth-century Pythagoreans in their approach to mathematics (*Rep.* VII 530d-531c). But holding that this was the only passage in which he referred to Pythagoreans and that

"apparently" Pythagorean thought had not been of much importance for his philosophy, including his cosmology, Solmsen is going against obvious facts. To refer to earlier philosophers, or even to contemporaneous thinkers, without explicitly mentioning their names was not an unusual procedure in those days. Plato repeatedly referred to Pythagorean doctrine by such rather vague formulas as φασὶ δ' οἱ σοφοί (*Gorg.* 507e7) or οἱ παλαιοὶ ταύτην φήμην παρέδοσαν (*Phil.* 16c7). Both passages contain quite fundamental philosophical doctrine, of which the Pythagorean character is beyond doubt. In the former this is obvious in particular by the principle of geometrical equality which goes back to Archytas and is adopted by Plato with a certain emphasis. We find him using it when dealing with democracy in *Rep.* VIII (558c4-6).

As for the *Phil.* passage, it will not do to remark that the ἀρχαῖοι "who were better than ourselves and dwelt nearer the gods", are referred to in such a vague and slightly ironical form, that it is not sufficient to identify them with early Pythagoreans only. In fact, the problems of πέρας/ἀπειρία and ἕν/πλῆθος point so clearly to the early Pythagorean double list of opposites, that there can be no doubt.

Both these passages then are about leading philosophical principles which Plato indeed practised, consciously taking them over from the earlier Pythagorean tradition. He did the same with regard to Orphico-Pythagorean beliefs about the soul and life after death, and lastly, when speaking of educators of the people, he mentions Pythagoras as a man who is honoured and followed as the *Founder of a special way of life*, a Πυθαγόρειος τρόπος τοῦ βίου (*Rep.* X 600ab).

In Solmsen's account of Plato's physics the stereometrical structure of the elements receives due attention. However, for Plato the cosmic order is founded first of all on the fact that the body of the physical world is "held together" and penetrated by a soul, and of this soul the composing stuff is described as divided into harmonic intervals. This was another way of accounting for the order of the cosmos by founding it on numerical proportions. Surely it can be said that for a modern physicist this is a strange doctrine. But it can scarcely be denied that in his conception Plato was led by earlier Pythagorean theory. For this we know for sure that it was earlier Pythagoreans who assigned numbers to musical sounds and numerical ratios to the intervals[100].

Instead then of finding in Plato's theory of the cosmos a complete reversal of "the" Greek cosmological tradition, one might rather say that, while also bearing in mind the physical theories of Empedocles and

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[100] Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology*, 66-72; Van der Waerden, *Die Pythagoreer*, 366ff.

Democritus, Plato especially took up the thread of one particular, but well-known, earlier theory and worked that out in a highly original way.

It is a pleasure to read in Solmsen's lecture that in his construction of the physical world Plato needed space and form, but he did not need "matter" in the sense of an immanent principle: *Space and Form explained his elements sufficiently.* From the stereometrical bodies assigned to each of the elements he went back to composing triangles. Did he go further back, to "ultimate principles"? Solmsen quotes Plato (*Tim.* 53d6f.): "The principles higher than these God knows, and of men whoever is dear to Him."—Solmsen does not claim to belong to the "elect", and therefore refrains from further speculation. He does say that the theory of ultimate principles need not have *replaced* the theory of Forms, but may have been intended to supplement or support it. Moreover, he is wise enough not to exclude it, but he does think it belonged to Plato's later years.

It is a great pleasure[101] to find Solmsen in the last pages of his lecture warning against making modern ideas of science the model of what science has to be. Present-day conceptions both of physics and of mathematics are quite different from what they were half a century ago. Solmsen also refrains from references to Platonic features in modern physics. He thinks it better not to speak of Whitehead nor does he wish to quote certain pronouncements of Heisenberg. That is certainly cautious. If one does not refrain altogether, one might feel obliged to say, for instance: I must confess that Whitehead's so-called Platonism is for me quite obviously unplatonic. Heisenberg is much more modest. He does not claim to give a Platonic philosophy for modern Christians. But certainly he understands something of Plato's use of images in the *Timaeus*; he could feel akin to Plato's philosophy while finding the structure of the world constituted by Forms, and even possibly by Forms that have a mathematical signature.

Solmsen ends his lecture on Plato and Science by a general characteristic: he praises Plato's theory of the visible world for its radical orientation towards the "good" of the whole, for its synthetic character, for the way in which he honoured man with due moderation, for not claiming absolute certainty for principles of physics, and finally "simply because of its beauty".

I shall now give my reflections on Findlay's Platobook of 1974, and in another chapter deal with W. K. C. Guthrie's two Plato-volumes.

[101] Cf. my "Conclusion" of Section III, Ch. VI. *Infra*, p. 204ff.

CHAPTER TWO

IN SEARCH FOR UNITY

*Reflections on J. N. Findlay's Plato book of 1974**

This is a book of extraordinary qualities. It is also a very daring work, in so far as it proposes in quite a categorical tone an explanation of what in the Author's opinion the meaning of Plato's philosophy must have been and still is, and this starting from a clearly hypothetical basis. In expounding his views and rendering Plato's thought, the A. shows often a highly suggestive and personal way of presentation. Not seldom he reaches real hights of spiritual insight. Yet, he is far from being always convincing. His main thesis, that the scope of Plato's philosophizing was from its earliest beginnings the total mathematization[1] of philosophical thought, the equation of eidetic forms with Numbers and ultimately the reduction of all Principles to one or two real ἀρχαί, is in our days not an isolated view. Fi. joins the theories of the Tübingen school, and though his presentation is from the beginning to the end of a very personal stamp, he knows and acknowledges in particular his kinship with the German scholars, and apparently came to work out his own ideas encouraged by their Plato-interpretation. What is interesting is to see in what respects he goes different ways.

Findlay defines his scope as: achieving a unified presentation of a unified view of Plato, developed in relation to the full span of the Platonic writings, and the ancient testimonies on Plato (XII). The contents of his unified view may be summarized as follows: the tendency to reduce reality to Numbers and Ratios, which ultimately are reduced to one or two ultimate Principles. Fi. speaks of this theory as "the basic programme of Plato's teaching in the Academy". It never became more than a programme, he assures, but "one that inspired all Plato's efforts"; moreover, "a thoroughly intelligible programme".

If we venture to ask whether that programme of mathematization actually stood at the outset of Plato's teaching, Fi. replies: It certainly did not stand at the beginning of his philosophical thinking. Before founding the Academy, in the company of Socrates, Plato had long given an on-

* J. N. Findlay, *Plato. The Written and Unwritten Doctrines.* London-N.Y. 1974.

[1] Findlay constantly uses the forms "mathematicization", "axiomaticization". Though these forms are linguistically correct, present day language prefers simpler ones, such as "mathematization", "axiomatization". I follow this usage.

tological meaning to the notional shapes of the virtues and excellences which Socrates examined. Moreover, Fi. admits that Plato, once having come into contact with Archytas, among other Pythagoreans in Tarentum, was no doubt willing to range the concepts of Numbers and geometrical Figures as notional Shapes of the same order as the virtues. However, the really important idea Fi. thinks Plato may be held to have taken over from the Italian Pythagoreans, was not so much the general concept of such notional Shapes, as "the grandiose project of mathematicizing them all (Fi. p. 17), of making them all part of a vast arithmetic". Fi. enlarges on this project, granting that "of course it was infinitely far from execution by the Italian Pythagoreans". Again he enlarges on it in the first pages of his ch. IX, in which, after completing his interpretation of Plato's writings, he summarizes his "united view" as follows (pp. 351-354): starting from a philosophy of "Ideal Contents", Plato next conceived the project of a complete mathematization, a new development, which must have happened after the first Sicilian journey, so that this project must have been in Plato's mind right from the beginning of his teaching in the Academy. Here (p. 352) the assessment is made that it is impossible to overestimate the importance of Plato's comprehensive mathematization of Ideal Contents. "It evinces Plato's profound grasp of the fact that only in the realm of the logico-mathematical that complete intellectual perspicuity is achievable, that everything complex reduces to the same interchangeable simplicities".

Concluding his account (p. 354) Fi. grants that in fact something more is in it than can be found written out in Plato's writings. To which he even adds that it will not be found either in any of the writings of those who have hitherto interpreted him.

That is saying much. At any rate, Fi.'s account of "what Plato meant" reminds us very much of H. J. Krämer, who in his work of 1959 (*APA*) asserted as firmly as the present Author holds his view of the project of mathematization, that Plato held the doctrine of two ultimate principles right from the beginning of his teaching career. Moreover, both authors hold that this was Plato's true philosophy, not to be found "directly" in the dialogues, but always present behind them; an account which is explicitly given by Aristotle and a few others. It is certainly Fi. who gives to the meaning of "the project of mathematization" a better, richer and clearer expression. Both scholars, however, agree in that they argue heavily ἐξ ὑποθέσεως. For if, by way of evidence for their thesis, we are essentially referred to Aristotle's testimony, it has to be noticed that anyway this does not reach further back than about 367. Now that was precisely the time Plato's written work shows a remarkable change and

testifies to new insights breaking through. That should at least make us cautious about antedating the so-called unwritten doctrines.

Though Findlay is no doubt subtle in the presentation of his theory and more subtle in his arguments than most of his predecessors, he shares a good deal, though not all, of Krämer's explanations of certain elements in the earlier dialogues which have been unacceptable to many of his readers, because they were so obviously made with a preconceived idea. Fi. shares the Tübingen view that it is impossible to trace any development of Plato from the dialogues. Nevertheless, his presentation of those writings under four headings, to wit (1) the Socratic dialogues, (2) the "ideological" dialogues of the middle period, (3) the "stoicheiological" or later critical dialogues in which the accent is on the Principles 'behind' the Eide, and (4) Plato's theory of the Concrete (in the *Tim.* and *Nom.*), does suggest a development, which no doubt is to be found in Plato's written work.

In fact, then, Fi. accepts that in Plato's philosophical thinking a theory of ideal Forms preceded that of Numbers, while the theory of ultimate Principles appears to have been a later development. Can it be held then that Aristotle's testimony is confirmed by the written work, "if purified of its incrustations"? Is it not rather the case that in the written work the theory of ideal Forms appears to belong to the middle period and that of Number and First Principles to a later one? And is not the hypothesis of a "programme" such as Fi. suggests, however vaguely he expresses it, rather a heavy construction? Sir David Ross, praised by Fi. for having definitely refuted Cherniss, treats the Unwritten Doctrines as a later development of Plato's thought. He does not antedate it. I think that was wise.

Counter-evidence

That there is some counter-evidence to Fi.'s thesis, is a point I wish to illustrate by examining a few passages of the earlier dialogues, up to the middle period.

1. The argument taken from the *Gorgias* is of a particular interest. In the later part of that dialogue, from 503 onward, the notions of *kosmos* and *taxis* are introduced, even with a reference to the doctrine of σοφοὶ ἄνδρες, who think that κοινωνία and φιλία, τάξις and ἁρμονία hold the world and human life together. The geometric mean is mentioned as a principle of the greatest importance. However, in the preceding discussion on justice, the same notions do not play a role. Socrates defends justice against Callicles with an impressive vigour, perfectly in line with his way of speaking in the *Apology* and in the *Crito*. But in the central part

of that dialogue the Pythagorean principles do not play a leading part. It is remarkable that Fi., who is rather strongly impressed by Socrates in the *Apol.* and *Crito*, does not like the *Gorgias*. He is even immensely irritated by Socrates' plea for justice, first against Gorgias' disciple Polos, next against the fiercer objections of Callicles. He gives the following assessment about the *Gorgias*: "As a drama the dialogue is poor. Socrates is depicted as uttering majestic sermons, which are "not his style"; sermons charged with a high-flown sense of 'mission' and not with half-ironic Socratic modesty." (p. 112).

That's too bad, indeed. Only, is the Socratic irony really lacking in the *Gorg.*, and can we agree with Fi. that the dialogue is dramatically poor? There are, next, the 'majestic sermons'. Certainly, Socrates in the *Gorg.* is speaking with tremendous earnestness. But is he not the same man who in the *Apol.* addresses his judges, and explains to them that one has to obey "the god" more than any man; that he therefore has to fulfill a certain task he feels to be imposed on him, and that in the fulfilment of his duty nothing like any regard for his own private comfort, pleasure or displeasure may come in. This intransigence about a divine order may certainly be called a sense of 'mission',—the 'mission' of the philosopher in his educational task toward his fellow-men.

A few pages further on, Fi. (p. 120) proves to have understood this perfectly well. He has the greatest praise for this sense of mission: he feels it to be "extraordinary" and "moving". This man "felt the very compulsion to his life-task as a divine voice, and humbly accepted it as a sacred mission". There have not been many, so he says, who combined the extreme of criticism with the humblest submission to accepted duties and pieties.—True. But why then that embittered irritation about the *Gorg.*? Did the author have just a bad day when he read it, and hence a certain disequilibrium of the mind?

In writing his excellent page on the *Apol.* he came across that passage, where Socrates says that it must be delightful, when being in Hades, to have the opportunity to interrogate the Homeric heroes and see, whether they actually know something about virtue or can be shown only to have a false pretention of knowledge. The picture is very Socratic indeed. It shows in a rather amusing way that Socrates imagined the stay in "Hades" as a kind of prothyron to Eternity, where the vision of a higher Glory awaits those who will be admitted to it. Fi. comments on the passage as follows: "This is what the Divine Man will be doing and doing to all eternity, and so expressing the eternal self-criticism which, though ignored by theologians, is plainly a vital aspect of Godhead as Such."

Does not this transposition show a certain lack of soberness? Platonists have had more profound views of Eternity. Plotinus, e.g., would no doubt have recognized the prothyron-character of Socrates' business. However serious a task that may have been here, Plotinus knew about its limits: when coming "yonder", all that will be left behind us. That is what he thought of it. And he was not at all an uncritical spirit, nor was he alien to dialectic.

Fi. seems to have some very peculiar sensitivities, and he does not refrain from uttering them quite frankly. The μετρητική-passage of the *Protag.* of course does not shock him: Number is of the higher level and may be said to be "in the Mind of God". On the other hand, when sometimes Socrates expresses himself in rather utilitarian terms, then Fi. will be at least displeased and declare that such a form of expression is more confusing than illuminating. Virtue is an absolute good and this character should not be blurred by connecting it with any either lower or higher kind of advantages[2].

When at a certain moment in the *Protag.* the discussion breaks off and after a while is renewed in a different form, starting from a few lines of the popular poet Simonides, Fi. reports: "Protag. is now permitted to do the questioning, while Socrates has to make the responses, *the analysis centring on some singularly asinine lines from Simonides*."

This author has the gift of reacting abruptly, in terms one rather might expect from some young and very critical student than from a senior professor, armed with the long practice of cautious, moderate and most of all "objective" scholarly discussions. It has its charm, when a man is spontaneous in his reactions. Yet, was it justified here to characterize a few rather simple-minded verses of a poet who makes himself the mouthpiece of a certainly not profound but broadly echoed popular wisdom, by a scornfully devastating formula? It has its irony that the author of suchlike assessments advocates a philosophy of mathematization and harmonious proportions.

The same author is also able to write a few excellent pages both on Socrates' way of arguing—which is, says he, "brimful of fallacy"—and on the personal character of the man behind that argument, a man who himself embodied the virtues he was so tenaciously discussing. In these few pages the Author's great qualities are apparent in an impressive form.

2. Let us now turn to the *Republic*. "Great parts of it cannot be understood without knowledge of the Unwritten Doctrines". No doubt Fi. is thinking of those important parts of the Books VI and VII which

[2] The argument (Findlay, *o.c.*, 116) refers to Socrates' way of speaking in *Gorg.* 470aff., 499bff.; cf. *Charm.* 169b, *Meno* 87eff., a.e.

deal with the problems of knowledge and its object, Truth. Do we find there the doctrine that the Ideas are Numbers or can be reduced to Ideal Numbers which directly depend on the absolute Principle, the One or the Good?

We might be inclined promptly to point to exactly these books as counter-evidence. For it cannot be asserted that either in the simile of the divided line (510/11) or in the programme of higher studies, described in 521/35, we would find pure νοητά equalled to Numbers or reduced to them, in such a sense that their structure would be essentially determined by numbers. What we do find is an intermediate position of mathematical thinking and its objects, as surpassing the level of sensible objects, but not yet being of the level of pure νοητά, since the objects of mathematics are reached by means of schemes and models and thus are shown to be closely connected with the order of visible things. Moreover, in so far as the object of mathematics can be said to be a νοητόν, it is obviously not ranked on the same ontological level as pure νοητά (Ideas): according to the parallel between the two main sections of the line, νοητά and ὁρατά, of which the latter is divided into "images" (reflections and shadows) and natural objects or artifacts themselves (πᾶν τὸ φυτευτὸν καὶ τὸ σκευαστὸν ὅλον γένος, 510a), the section of intelligibles, too, must be divided into a part containing "images" (of νοητά) and a part containing νοητά themselves. Thus mathematical numbers and geometric figures take, in fact, an intermediate place. For to those who seek the ὄντως ὄν they have the same function as reflections and shadows have in the visible world, presenting the "things themselves" as through a mirror.

Certainly there are *Ideas of numbers* in the realm of pure νοητά. In the *Phaedo* too they are mentioned as examples, beside greatness, smallness and equality (*Phaed.* 100c-101d). But there are also the καλόν, the δίκαιον etc. And probably Plato had many other "Forms" in mind when scheduling the section of pure νοητά. He thought of "intelligible Being" as archetypal with regard to the world of Becoming, and there is no reason at all for supposing that by "pure intelligibles" he only thought of moral and mathematical concepts. Anyhow, neither his Ideas of Beauty or of Virtue nor his Exemplary Forms of sensible things appear to have been conceived as *identical* with numbers or somehow "determined" by these in their structure, as would be the case if Ideal Numbers were meant to be a higher Principle of order within the realm of intelligible Being, as they were thought to be e.g. by Robin. Whatever Plato may have held in his later years, we do not find anything like that in the *Republic.*

In so far, I think, we have in fact to allege *Rep.* VI-VII, or rather V-VII as counter-evidence. However, it would be superficial to stop

here. When rereading 510/11 and a.o. 524/26 the text prompts us to some more reflexions, and it would be certainly incomplete to hold them back.

The concept of Number, though we may have come to it by means of sight and sensible objects (cf. *Tim.* 47a-c), is in fact a νοητόν, or, as Fi. calls it, an "eidetic content". Plato says so explicitly (510d-e): Though mathematicians make use of visible figures, what they have in mind is not the diagrams they draw and the models they make, but *the square-itself* and the *diagonal-itself*, of which the drawn figures are only images. The mathematician is well aware of that. What he studies can only be apprehended by thought (τῇ διανοίᾳ). It belongs to the class of νοητά. 524/26 deals with arithmetic. It might seem that number is conceived by means of sight. For practical purposes calculation is made by means of concrete things. The mathematician however, pursues his studies for the sake of knowledge and of truth. He grasps the numbers as units, and this can be done only by thought. This act of the intellect is at first indicated by the verb διανοηθῆναι (526a). But the statement is immediately followed by another one in which it is said that mathematical science *forces the soul to use pure thought* (αὐτῇ τῇ νοήσει) *to arrive at pure Truth* (526b1-3). And that is why Plato considered the study of the mathematical disciplines as the most appropriate preparation for that abstract thinking which was for him philosophy properly speaking. He called it *dialectic*, the science that makes no longer use of visible illustrations, but, using the *hypotheses* of mathematics as stepping-stones, seeks to rise above them and reach the ultimate Principle on which they all depend.

The question must be raised of whether the objects of mathematics, by being "dianoetical", which proves to be "noetic", are as a matter of fact identical with the objects of pure thinking. In other words, if mathematical objects are νοητά, do they not prove to be *in se* not different from "Ideal Numbers"?

It is clear that for Plato mathematical studies were a *preparation* to philosophy, not philosophy itself. Yet, in fact, the mathematician is concerned with "ideal contents". His method, as restricted to his science, may be essentially different from that of philosophy—directed toward mathematical proof, not to inquiring about the underlying ultimate Principle of the hypotheses—yet his object in itself is an object of pure thought. It is understandable, therefore, that both Gaiser and Fi. did not distinguish between mathematical numbers and Ideal Numbers. Before them Richard Robinson looked at the problem in the same way[3].

[3] Richard Robinson, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, and ed., Oxford 1953, 200f.

J. A. Brentlinger was alive to the problem[4] and argued that Plato certainly held a doctrine of mathematical objects as Intermediates, which implies a lower ontological level than that of pure νοητά. In fact, Plato's text does not give us the right to put mathematical objects and Ideas on the same level. Yet, "the square itself" is an object of thought. Brentl. (162f.): "Somehow Plato thinks the dianoetic sciences both do and do not take the Ideas as their subject matter; in a sense they do, and in a sense they do not."

Sure, we must think so. But then we must not hesitate to say that mathematical objects, though they are objects of thought, were not Ideas in the full sense. In what respect were they deficient? First, by having been conceived with the help of visible things; next, by being understood as self-sufficient structures, serving in an autonomous discipline. This is a limited view. It fails to question the pre-suppositions and is never able to take a synoptic view of the whole and see that all depends on one absolute principle, the ἀρχὴ ἀνυπόθετος. The synoptic view is the philosopher's. *Pace* Brentlinger, we have to notice that Cornford saw the matter well and expounded it clearly in the introductions preceding his translation of those chapters of the *Rep.* referred to above, in particular those which deal with the mathematical sciences and with Dialectic[5]. I think we have to take exception to Cornford only in this, that he thought the Ideas too exclusively to have been moral conceptions. Brentlinger, on the other hand, seems somewhat too easily inclined to accept that mathematicals conceived as νοητά were "Ideal Numbers" in the sense of the Unwritten Doctrines. The point is, that in the *Rep.* Plato does not give any indication for understanding the relation of Numbers to the other Ideas in the sense suggested by Aristotle and Theophrastus.

We have to go back to the *Phaedo*, 99d-101d, where the Ideas are introduced as an indispensable "hypothesis" both to explain things as they are and our knowledge of them. How is it that things are fine or good, or big? Things can be fine only by the presence of or by sharing in that which is fine itself, and big only by bigness itself, etc. "Ideas" of bigness and of smallness, of multiplicity and of twoness are mentioned[6].

Certainly Ideas of numbers were "laid down" as a basis to explain both things existing and our knowledge of them, just as Ideas of bigness

[4] "The Divided Line and Plato's Theory of Intermediates", in: *Phronesis* 8 (1963), 146-166.

[5] F. M. Cornford, *The Republic of Plato*, translated with Introd. and Notes, first published 1941, many repr., [7]1955; espec. 218, 231, 235, 245. Brentlinger refers only to an earlier article of Cornford (in *Mind* 1932).

[6] I am following here the reflections and the wording of Richard Robinson, who—exceptionally—speaks of "fine" and "big" instead of using the more solemn terms of "the Beautiful" and "the Great".

and of smallness, of unity and of multiplicity, of equality and of difference must have been assumed. We find them next to "beauty" and "goodness". There is not anything to make us suppose that Number is somehow identified with either the essence of concrete things—say snow or fire—or with moral conceptions or virtues. Nor is there any indication for assuming that Numbers so to speak "absorb" all other kinds of Forms, shaping them by their character or incorporating them in a genus—species relation. Now that is, in fact, what Fi. would have us believe, both as being involved in the "hypothesis" passage of the *Phaedo* and in those passages of the *Rep.* which are concerned with the various kinds of knowledge and of being. I do not see that in either of these dialogues such an overruling status is attributed to numbers. And that is why I think we have to take the testimony of both *Phaedo* and *Rep.* as counter-evidence to Fi.'s thesis.

3. But what about *Euthyphro* 6d-e, where Socrates asks for information about "the eidos itself by which all that is pious is pious"?

4. And what about *Lysis* 219c-d, where the discussion on φιλία comes to the statement that, since one thing is liked for the sake of another, a πρῶτον φίλον must exist which is lovable for its own sake? These are Socratic dialogues; yet, they show Plato's form of expression and his way of thinking, and that at a rather early stage. Or what shall we say?—

Fi. uses these passages as an argument for his view that at a very early date, when listening to Socrates' discussions with different people, Plato took the notions searched for in those talks as entities having an ontological status: from his first beginnings he was a metaphysician, while Socrates' interest was essentially in logic. Fi. even imagines young Plato as presenting his metaphysical theories to his master, and the latter as listening to him with a benevolent smile.

This is actually nothing but sheer fantasy. It must be noticed that neither the *Euthyphro* nor the *Lysis* were of a very early date. What Plato thought when listening to Socrates, we do not know. That he had a clear-cut system of metaphysics during his master's lifetime can anyhow not be inferred from the Socratic dialogues we just mentioned nor from any other Socratic dialogue. Socrates certainly sought for "the one notion or kind "pious", by which all pious acts or characters are called by that name". He may have expressed himself in such terms as Plato attributes to him. And certainly he may have thought that the φίλον ultimately must be liked for its own sake. Plato is writing Socratic talks there. We may see his own doctrines present *in nuce* in those very words. But these dialogues do not provide us with an argument in favour of a fifth-century theory of Platonic Ideas, shaped under the master's eyes.

5. Can it be said on sufficiently solid grounds that from his very

beginnings Plato was in search of the one ἀρχή, and this as the supreme Principle of order, the head of an all-embracing system of Numbers and numerical ratios? That is, in fact, what Fi. holds. But in this he expressed himself so vaguely that one could hardly contradict him: in fact, every thinking man seeks to create order in an unlimited multiplicity of phenomena, and he does so by seeking unity in the multiplicity. Certainly Socrates did so, and Plato after him.

"He did not know himself what he was seeking for; he could not express it in words, neither in the unpronounced words in his own mind, nor in any written work." For the last part of this sentence Fi. could refer to *Ep.* VII 341c. As he puts it, however, one feels inclined to ask: How could he then express it in his oral teaching?—A knotty question, indeed. But is not all this making the philosopher a bit too ἄλογος?

That in his younger years Plato was not fully aware of the tendency of his own work, is not an unreasonable thesis. But supposed the tendency was that of axiomatization, can it be held then that Plato even in his later years was not aware of this? That seems rather a strange assertion, at least if one emphasizes strongly that in his later written work the philosopher focussed his interest on the so-called *stoicheia.* Anyhow, by denying in this way that Plato knew himself what he was striving for, Fi. certainly did not bring out more clearly what is the real "grandeur" of Plato as a philosopher. And that was what he wanted to do. I think that, more than half a century ago, John Burnet gave a more rational and convincing interpretation of Plato's own testimony in the *Seventh Letter*, when supposing that the philosopher deliberately did not make the metaphysical synthesis of his own assumed First Principle, the One or the Good, and the Maker of our world, the Demiurge: this is what he left to a later, perhaps more enlightened generation.

A few essential features

I shall now consider more closely a few essential features of Plato's philosophy as it is understood by Findlay.

1. First is, of course, "the project of mathematicization". *Phaedo* 100-101 is interpreted in that sense. The argument runs as follows (Fi. 140f.). Hypothetically one will assume the existence of such Eide as: the Beautiful, the Good, the Great. "They will all, as the context necessitates, represent patterns of *excellence* or *goodness* .... "*How* they are to be derived from the Good or supreme Principle of Platonic thought, is in the context left unclear"—My marginal note: that is to say, not a word is said about reducing "the patterns of excellence or goodness" to quantity (Number), nor of ultimately reducing them to one Principle, the Good, but Fi. sees "the whole of Dialectic and of the projected generation of the mathematicized Eide from the One and the Great and Small" looming here "obscurely in the background", whence he concludes: "but somehow they do so derive".

This is a striking example of interpreting ἐξ ὑποθέσεως, and completing Plato's theology in a special way. Further on (141) we learn that "the whole introduction of the Eide as a second-best to an explanation in terms of the Good only makes sense on the assumption that the Eide are all special cases of Goodness". I insert another marginal note: Nowhere is it said that the relation between the Good and—as it is said—the other Eide would be that of genus and species; not in the *Phaedo*, and not in *Rep.* 508-9 either. There the Good is referred to as the αἴτιον and as such clearly placed above Intelligible Being (the Eide). If it is ontologically superior, is that sufficiently accounted for by the genus-species "model"? Hardly, I think. Could it be that Fi. in his deep concern for axiomatization attributes to Plato something which for the modern thinker is an absolute ideal of philosophy, but was not assumed in the same sense by the writer of both the *Phaedo* and the *Rep.*? It seems so.

It is Richard Robinson who, with regard to the present question, makes a very interesting remark[7]. When analyzing Plato's use of the method of hypothesis, first in the *Phaedo*, next in the *Rep.*, he remembers J. Stenzel who, in the international Mathematiker Kongress at Zürich, 1932, presented an axiomatizing interpretation of the Divided Line passage on "rising above the hypotheses". Robinson thinks the interpretation is justified. For Plato is speaking of the mathematical sciences as assuming a whole number of concepts, definitions and theses, from which they proceed to argue to their conclusions. Now "axiomatization" consists in gradually reducing these assumptions to the smallest possible number, deducing them ultimately from one or two unreducible principles, which are the "beginning" (ἀρχή). And this is precisely what Plato describes as the method of dialectic, which uses the "hypotheses" of mathematics as steppingstones, enabling them to rise above these provisional assumptions and climb up to the ἀρχὴ ἀνυπόθετος. Though recognizing the valuable insight of the axiomatization theory, Robinson points to the difference between the modern theory and the ancient one. In fact, it is the differences that are particularly interesting. Today axiomatization is an autonomous ideal, at least in mathematics: we axiomaticize mathematics for the sake of the axiomatization itself; "we enjoy the elegance of a deductive system as such". Plato, on the other

[7] Richard Robinson, *o.c.*, 168f.

hand, valued axiomatization only as a means to certify knowledge. The axiomatization-theory is an incomplete account of the Line.

We agree with this. But I think there is another incompleteness in the proposed interpretation. For Plato the certainty of knowledge results from the reality of the invisible world of pure νοητά. This, and this alone, is truly and in the full sense *real*. Our knowledge is of that Reality and has its certainty in that. Here it is Fi. who gives the right explanation: Plato was a metaphysician, and for him logic was never separated from metaphysics. As for the axiomatization interpretations of both *Phaed.* 100-101 and *Rep.* 510/11, I *do* think it an interpretation ἐξ ὑποθέσεως.

2. ''*Plato did not teach a two-worlds-theory*''. In his *Preface* (XI) Fi. writes that it is his firm conviction ''grown on me over the years'', ''that it is incredibly wrong to treat Platonism as a kind of dualism''. For Plato there is ''nothing substantial, nothing ontically ontic'' in the so-called solid world of particular things, which in Fi.'s terminology are called ''instantiations''. Now let us first of all say that it is a benefit to meet a man who firmly believes in the ''ontically ontic'' reality of the invisible, intelligible world, and believes this to be the only ''true'', i.e. *full* Reality. So far I am on his side. Only it would be doing wrong to Plato to suggest—that is, to give the impression to more and less initiated readers—that Plato regarded the visible world as ''non-being'', i.e. as some kind of non-reality, of ''maya'', of unreal appearance. That is not the case. Plato knew the difference between relative and Absolute Being, the former depending on the latter, both in its being (its existence) and in its particular character (its being such-and-such). Visible things were for him not just nothing. They were not ''Being'' in the absolute sense, but they certainly *took part* in it; otherwise they wouldn't exist at all. In *Phaedo* 79a Plato makes his fundamental distinction: There are *two kinds of being* (δύο εἴδη τῶν ὄντων), the visible and the invisible. The latter, by being always identical with itself, is the object of our knowledge; of the former we can have *doxa*. But doxa is not about *nothing*! How could it be? The object of opinion is different from the object of knowledge, but we do have an opinion about *something* (*Rep.* 478b). What is then the object of opinion? It must be of something that partakes both of being and of non-being (*Rep.* 478c-479d).

Plato has never been unfaithful to this conviction, not in *Tim.* 27d5-28a4 either. His account of the visible world, to be given in that dialogue is an εἰκὼς λόγος. That is not a *mythos*, in the sense of a tale of wonderful fantasy. Far from that. But Plato is severe: he does not give it the predicate of knowledge. That would have been too pretentious.

Nevertheless, he is convinced that it is *the nearest approach* to Truth one could give at all. And he is in earnest about that[8].

I think the true solution to the so-called two-worlds-theory is not that of a flat denial of any kind of reality to ''instantial things''. It is rather that of accepting the principle of subordination. Now certainly this implies the existence of degrees of being. Whatever may be our own valuation of such a theory, this is no doubt how Plato looks at ''Being''. And I think we are quite well able to understand him. Findlay certainly does. He only expresses himself too strongly when suggesting that Plato did not attribute any reality to the sensible world. And by speaking in that manner he creates misunderstanding[9].

3. ''Plato posited *an eidetic Mind*, i.e. *the Eidos of Mind*-as-such.'' This is what Fi. emphatically holds. What does he mean by it, and to which texts does he refer?

In reflecting on *Soph.* 248e-249a it happened to me to see that in this passage Plato, while considering the whole of intelligible Being, views it as a παντελὲς ὄν, perfect Being, and from the fact of its perfection concludes that it must have life and motion, soul and insight, that is to say, that it must be a living being of the highest order, that is: *a thinking living Being*. However strange this might seem to us, I could understand this and, I hope, make it clear to others, by making them aware that to Plato the intelligible world was an articulated, organic unity, which for a Greek is nothing else than a ζῷον; moreover, since it is a *perfect* living being, a rational or *thinking* one. Now this is what we find confirmed in *Tim.* 37c6-d2, 31b1: the visible cosmos, which has been made to be an animated living being, can only be so by a resemblance to its eternal pattern, which thus appears to be conceived as a παντελὲς ζῷον of a higher order.

This is what I argued repeatedly, a.o. in my modest book ''Plato, The Philosopher of the Transcendent'' (first ed. 1968), written in the Dutch language, and also in the 9th chapter of my volume *Philosophia*, Part I, Studies in Greek Philosophy, under the title ''Some controversial points of Plato-interpretation re-examined''. I do think the argument is correct and that this is actually the conception Plato had in mind.

Is this what Fi. means? It seems not. Does he (264f.) understand the above-cited *Soph.* passage as I did (and do)? When reading p. 50/51—about ''the doctrine that there are not only Eide of sorts of *things*,

[8] About the meaning of εἰκὼς λόγος in the *Tim.* Bernd Witte gave an excellent account in *Archiv f. Geschichte d. Philos.* 46 (1964), 1-15.

[9] Findlay deals with *Rep.* V 477-479 on pp. 180ff. of his Platowork. I shall consider that passage later (under no. 6).

circles, plants, men, cities etc., but also Eide of the acts of understanding, perceiving, reasoning, knowing etc."—I rather doubt it. Sure, Fi. comes to admitting that the Eide of the apprehensions must form an eidetic system, "an eternal timeless Mind or Mind as Such". However, this seems not to be understood as the whole of the noetic cosmos itself (the whole of νοητά), but as the whole of a special kind of Eide, those of the acts of understanding etc., introduced as a different kind, next to and beside of the "other" Forms or νοητά. What does Fi. mean?

He refers to *Parm.* 134a-d, "where there is said to be a Knowledge Itself correlated with every form of Being Itself". Now this is the passage in which the so-called χωρισμός of the Ideas by a kind of parody is reduced ad absurdum: transcendent Ideas, separated from concrete things, could only be known by a divine Intellect, say by God, just as things here could only be known by us, by our human kind of knowledge. Thus, our world and the Ideal one would be cut off completely the one from the other.

Is that a *proving* passage to refer to for explaining *Soph.* 248e-249a? Fi. uses it so. The reference is most unfortunate indeed. For it is attributing to Plato a view of Reality he never had[10]. As for the *Soph.* passage, when stating (51) that here Mind, Life, Soul and Movement are said to have a place in eternal Being, Fi. is right. He is not right, I think, when adding that Mind, Life, Soul and Movement "are thus *placed among* the *Eide*", a formula which suggests that they are introduced there as *another* kind of Eide *next to* the "ordinary" kind of usually accepted ones. It does not suggest, so it seems to me, that the Ideal world is an organic whole, living, moving (viz. by the motion of the Spirit), thinking. And that was, I think, what was needed.

Fi. speaks of the Eidos of *Thinking as Such*, "which all thinking Souls instantiate" (143). It is in explaining the argument of the *Phaedo* that the Soul by being essentially connected with the Idea of Life cannot be susceptible to death, but must be ἄφθαρτος. Fi. judges the arguments as Plato presents it unsatisfactory, "in a sense at least", but grants that it is based on a deep mutual connectedness and affinities of notions which can hardly be denied. For Plato the whole cosmos was pervaded with Life, and Life went together with Thinking (Fi. says so; I think we have to make a restriction: life was by no means considered as going *always* together with thinking; it was no doubt recognized to be a condition for it, but only the highest form of life was thinking). Hence, the Eidos of

[10] H. G. Gadamer noticed the point in his review of Fi.'s "Plato" in *Philos. Rundschau* 24 (1977), 208, and took exception to it ("Das ist nun wirklich nicht mehr akzeptabel", E.q.s.).

Life must have occupied a very special place in Plato's system, and Thought as Such, Fi. goes on, cannot have been without a uniquely significant place in the realm of the Eide: it is this paradigmatic Thought which is "instantiated" by all thinking Souls.

Are we still with Plato in the *Phaedo*? Or have we drifted pretty far away? I am afraid so. Anyhow in the *Phaedo* Plato is concerned with the souls of men and the problem of their persistence after life on earth. He is not at all concerned with the cosmos. No doubt when writing the *Phaedo* he had more in the back of his mind than just that which we read in the text. Nevertheless, from the *Phaedo* to the *Tim.* is a far distance. We should not forget that. I think it good to remember that in the *Phaedo* there is nothing that points in the direction of such a conception as a "Mind as Such" which is "instantiated" by what Plato at that stage called our souls. He does say that these souls are more akin to the Invisible than to the Visible[11]. And certainly that Invisible was to him a great, tremendous Reality. But it neither appears marked by the feature of equation to Numbers nor by that of a "Mind as Such".

Fi. next comes to the *Philebus*. Here, no doubt, he is on more solid ground. In this late dialogue, so he writes (280), the two basic Principles of Plato's Stoicheiology, the Principle of Limit (πέρας) and that of the Indefinite (ἄπειρον) are clearly distinguished and shown at work, first in the delimitation of the Eide (15c-18d), next in the delimitation of instantial phenomena (23c-26d). Thinking of Aristotle's account of the two Principles, Fi. speaks of the "self-differentiation of Unity into a diversity of forms", and also of "the specifiability of Unity and the instantiability of its specifications". Of course we can understand quite well what he means. Nevertheless, this is interpreting heavily. Not only do we have to observe that Plato precisely in the first-mentioned passage of the *Phil.* warns us against setting up an unmediated antithesis of One-Many. Even more important is the question of whether the specification-model can really serve for explaining the universe. What we actually find in Plato is, that the Indefinite is "informed" by the Principle of Limit. This, however, leaves us the possibility of seeing the causality of the First Principle in another way than that of the genus-species relation. For the moment, I leave this problem aside and hasten on to that of "the Mind-as-Such". Fi. finds it in or behind *Phil.* 30. Let us look at the text.

To the Principles of Limit and of the Indefinite a third has been added, "all that springs from them" (τὸ τούτων ἔκγονον ἅπαν, *Phil.* 26d), and to these three a fourth is joined, (the αἴτιον) which is said to be the same as the active principle, τὸ ποιοῦν. That which comes into being, the

[11] *Phaedo* 79b 16-17, d9-c5.

γιγνόμενον, is the ποιούμενον (27a1). The cause is also called τὸ πάντα ταῦτα (sc. τὰ γιγνόμενα) δημιουργοῦν (27b1). When a few lines further (27b7) the four principles are summarized, the third one is called "the Being that has come to be by mixture" (μεικτὴν καὶ γεγενημένην οὐσίαν). Mind and Wisdom (νοῦς καὶ φρόνησις) are found to be the ruling principles of the universe (28a-e).

Next, the question is raised of the relation of individual men to the whole of the universe. We have in ourselves an imperfect part of that which in the universe exists more complete and perfect. This applies both to our physical components and to our rational part, our soul and thinking which, speaking by analogy, can be said to have part in that higher Body, Soul and thinking Mind, which is the visible world (29b-30c). "A royal Soul and a royal Mind" come to dwell in "the nature of Zeus", through the power of the Cause (30d).

What does Plato mean? Apparently "the Cause" is of a transcendent order, and as such is distinguished from the Soul and Mind that is immanent in the world. Hackforth appears to be right in commenting on our passage of the *Phil.* as follows[12]: The transcendent αἰτία, which at c6 was identified with σοφία and νοῦς, is by self-projection the cause of the νοῦς that is immanent in the cosmos. The immanent νοῦς needs a soul to be present to the body it has to direct, the transcendent Noûs, on the other hand, exists by itself. Hackforth refers here to Proclus in *Tim.* I 402D. For "the nature of Zeus" he refers to *Tim.* 30b, where this (visible) world is said to be an ensouled living being, gifted with intellect (ζῷον ἔμψυχον ἔννουν τε) "through the Providence of the God".

Hackforth grants that Plato's text is not perfectly lucid. No doubt he is on purpose slightly mythologizing. However, this cannot obfuscate the distinction made between the transcendence of the Cause and the immanence of the Soul of the cosmos which is regarded as divine. There might be a certain misunderstanding about the relation between the rational souls of men and the divine World-Soul. Are the human souls said or meant to be *a part* of the latter? We have to remember *Tim.* 41c6-d1, d4ff., where it is said that the immortal souls of men had to be made by the Demiurge himself, and actually were made by him (in contradistinction to the human bodies, including what is later called their vegetative souls, which were made by the "visible gods", the Star-Souls). Hence I do not think Plato intended to say that the rational Souls of men were *parts* of the World-Soul. That would be in flat contradiction with *Tim.* 41cd. But, since they were supposed to have been

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[12] R. Hackforth, *Plato's Philebus*, translated with an introd. and commentary, Cambridge 1945, ³1972, 56f., n. 1.

made out of the same kind of stuff as the World-Soul (*Tim.* 41d4ff.), they could be said to have "part in" that first-created, more perfect and complete Soul gifted with *Noûs* which is "the royal Soul and Mind" that has come to dwell in the cosmos. Apparently that "Royal Mind" is not the "Mind-as-Such" meant by Fi. That Mind is of the order of the αἴτιον, the transcendent Cause which itself is *Noûs.*

Fi. (280) speaks of it in these terms: "The *Phil.* is also important as clearly pointing to the role of the Cosmic Mind, instantiated in the World-Soul,—and in distinguishing this Cosmic Mind, grandiose as it is, from a yet more august eidetic Mind or Mind as Such, which, eternally correlated with all the Eide, and a Godhead rather than a God, is responsible for all order, beauty and exact measure everywhere".

The distinction between a Cosmic Mind and the World-Soul is left somewhat vague in Plato's text. It might be better in this case not to speak of instantiation, since both depend likewise on the transcendent Cause. I think Fi. is right in describing it as a thinking Mind, divine, but not to be taken in the "theist" sense, as a personal God. Therefore, it is correct not to speak of a divine Mind having the Ideas "within" itself, as the object of its thinking. Plato of course did not express himself in that way. But he *did* say that he could not conceive of the παντελῶς ὄν, that is the whole of intelligible Being, as exempt from life and notion, thinking and wisdom. Expressing it in the positive: because of its perfection he conceived the whole of intelligible Being as a ζῷον, a thinking one and of supreme wisdom.

This comes very close to Fi.'s description. Only, he gives the impression of not *absorbing* the *Eide* into the whole of the thinking Mind, but placing the latter as another *Eidos* so to speak parallel to, and in a sense against "all the Eide",—"eternally correlated with them". What does this mean? Is it the subject-object relation, the thinking Mind and "all the Eide" thought by it? It seems so. I think the opposition might better be avoided. The thinking Mind *is* the *Eide*, the *Eide are* the thinking Mind. That seems to me what Plato meant. But possibly Fi. can agree with me in this matter[13]. Anyhow, the *Phil.* does not offer us any further indication about the αἰτία than its transcendency and its noetic character.

4. "Plato did not really believe in Ideas." This is another thesis of Fi.'s. What does he mean by it and to which texts does he refer?

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[13] P. 288, still dealing with the *Phil.*, Findlay asks: "Where are the innumerable Eide in this picture?" sc. in the fourfold scheme of Limit, Unlimited, Mixture and Cause? He replies: The Supreme Mind is itself an Eidos, in which all other Eide can .... be regarded as included, since it is the eternal cognizance of them all. On the other hand, he emphasizes the role of the Eide as "cases of the Limit" with regard to the process of "instantiation". (In Plato's terms: as "examples", to be imitated by concrete things).

He touches upon the matter when explaining the place and role of the *Eide* in the picture of the four principles in the *Phil.* First, the Supreme Mind (which is the fourth principle) is itself an *Eidos* in which all other *Eide* can be regarded as included. Next, the *Eide* "not only live secure, in fainéant fashion, in the Supreme Cause: they are also involved in its instantial involvements".

This rather esoteric terminology leads to the conclusion that the *Eide* also become "cases" of the limit, which sets bounds to indefiniteness in the field of coming-into-being of sensible things.

On the other hand, the eidetic Mind is not the ultimate Cause. "It is plain that for Plato there is a yet further Cause of the Eide".

So far the sentence makes clear that in Fi.'s view the transcendent Mind, which was said to be "eternally correlated with the other Eide", in fact was conceived as their *Cause.* How? No doubt *by thinking* them, in the way in which a thinking Mind produces its objects, not as if they would not have existed before, but by an eternal process of generation. Yet, the relation is a causal one.

Fi. goes one: but also of the Mindfulness which has all the Eide for its object there is a yet further Cause, and this is the final Unity itself, of which all-embracing Mindfulness is merely the most embracing specification.

This is not in the least indicated or referred to in the *Phil.* It is certainly true that the *Peras* and *Apeiron* of that dialogue were not in Plato's view the ultimate Principles. We must infer that from the fact that by "mixing" they give rise to the γεγενημένη οὐσία. Apparently in this case the *Peras* signifies the *Eide.* Only from later testimonies can we know about the two ultimate Principles and conclude that the ultimate Cause is Unity in the sense of the Absolute. Hence, we can agree with Fi.'s statement that the Eide become "cases" of the Limit. Certainly, they do. Only, we do not read this immediately in the *Phil.*, nor is there anything in that dialogue about the Eide being "eternally generated" by an eidetic *Noûs*, which is the Cause of the "mixture". Is it really doing justice to Plato's thought thus to insert "the eidetic Mind" as an intermediary Cause of intelligible Being? I rather have the impression that Plato *identified* what is later called the κόσμος νοητός as a whole with the eidetic Mind. In Plato's view, I think, Intelligible Being depends immediately on the First Cause, which is the Good (*Rep.* VI 508e-509a) or the One (according to later testimony), and was as a whole conceived by him as a thinking Mind (*Soph.* 248e-249a).

Let us follow Fi. further (p. 288). He explains the ultimate Unity which, as the final *peras*, lies even beyond Mind as Such, by declaring: "In all the Eide, including Mind as Such, we have only 'the Power of the Cause' variously operative, not anything with an independent subsistence. The reason, therefore, why the Eide play so small a part in the *Phil.* is that, shocking as it may seem, Plato does not, from an ultimate standpoint, really believe in the Eide at all."

Are we still with Plato here? Or are we, many centuries later, with Hegel interpreting intelligible Being, and even all Being, as the ἐνέργεια of the One? And will not "ultimately" that One, too, disappear in a sense and be dissolved into the infinite multiplicity of "the other" which is "all and everything"?

"The Eide and the eidetic Mind are alike merely the One in action." On the final page of his treatment of the *Phil.* (295) Fi. comments on that passage at the end of the dialogue in which Plato speaks of "five possessions" (κτήματα) that distinguish the good Life. The first of them is not strictly a possession, but an eternal Essence which the good life only exemplifies. Its nature floats about such things as Measure (μέτρον), the Measured and Timely (τὸ μέτριον and καίριον). No doubt it represents the Limit, or the One, or the Good. The second "possession" is the innumerable species of Beauty, Perfection, etc., i.e. the *Eide.* The third is Mind or Wisdom, the fourth the Sciences, Arts and correct Opinions, and the fifth pure and painless Enjoyments.—"Plato's stress on the μέτριον and καίριον makes plain that his Ultimate is not the blank Unity of Neoplatonic exaggeration: it is blank, but only because it can be infinitely filled in, because it is Number or Ratio or Unified Pattern as Such rather than any specific form of them."

Yet, is this not "ultimately" identifying the One with Number or Ratio-as-Such? Did Plato do so? I think he did not. But probably the philosopher Fi. is speaking here from a kind of eschatological vision: Neoplatonism sees the cosmic process as a gradual coming forth of "all things" from the One-and-the-First, and then again as a process of reversion, so that "in the end" all things will be so to speak re-absorbed into the Unity. One may remember 1 Cor. 15.28. Here too, at the end God will be "all in all". Hegel, no doubt, found in this a mythologized version of the cosmic process referred to above.

Plato's thought leaves room for different developments. Fi.'s development is confessedly a rationalist one, in so far as he wishes to eliminate any thought of a "personal God"—which in his view would always be an "instantiation". Moreover, his development implies a certain interpretation of Neoplatonism which brings us rather far from Plotinus. Going back to Plato we have to ask: did he really identify his First Principle with Number or Ratio? I do not think he did. From Aristotle we know about a derivation-system. However, that which *derives* from a First Principle depends on it, but is not as such to be iden-

tified with it. Plato in advance tried to exclude that error (*Rep.* 508e3-509a5). Both for Plato and for Plotinus intelligible Being was of fundamental importance for any further kind of reality, "later" and perpetually depending on it, but by this very dependence not devoid of reality, beauty and order.

Such is Platonism. We would betray it by saying that Plato "ultimately did not believe in the Eide".

After the *Phil.* Fi. comes to the "cryptic passage" of the *Second Letter*, 312d-313a. It is, so he thinks (296ff.), in perfect agreement with the earlier treated passages of the *Rep., Parm., Soph.* and *Phil.*: there too, the First Principle is both of "an exalted Initselfness" and of "an infinitely ambient outflow"; the "Seconds" are the *Eide* or specific essences, and the Third must be the World-Soul. Plato, however, dwells on the psychological difficulty of accepting a transcendent Indefinite, characterizable only through negations or seeming contradictions, as the ultimate horizon in which the Eide are contained. Fi. (298) speaks here of "the mysticism which for him is the circumambient background of all lucidity". This (313b) has often been rejected as un-Platonic, he says. But he finds too much in Plato to regard it as spurious. Only, the mystical is by no means to be identified with the unutterable. It is neither illogical nor illucid. It is merely lucid and logical in an extraordinary manner, transcending our ordinary ways of speaking. The 'educated', Plato says (314a), will have no difficulty regarding the whole doctrine: they will embrace it with wonder and enthusiasm. But see that it does not fall into the hands of the uneducated masses .....

This is a remarkable piece of commentary. For really, we cannot say there is in 312e any reference to the Indefinite Principle as a kind of sphere of darkness in which the lucid Eide would be contained. There is indeed a whole page of nebulous talk. Fi. "fills it in" by means of what we know from elsewhere about Plato's assuming a second Ultimate Principle, and has no suspicions about the strange quasi-mysterious and esoteric talk on the not-understanding of ignorants and the enthusiasm of the εὐφυεῖς. As a matter of fact, there are serious reasons for doubting the authenticity of the document. They have been well expounded by Souilhé[14]. I think he was right in finding in *Epist. II* an imitation of, *inter alia*, certain lines of *Epist. VII*.

On the philosophical passage of *Epist. VII* Fi. notes that Plato in these pages does not hold philosophical insight to be ineffable and private, only that it cannot be shared while words are used in the ordinary way, based on examples taken from sense-experience.

[14] J. Souilhé, Platon, *Les Lettres* (Oeuvres complètes, t. XIII, 1re partie), Paris 1949, Introd. LXXIX-LXXXII.

5. *The Divine Mind.* Fi. (361) remarks: Aristotle innovated on two important points: (1) by a radically new conception of ὕλη, (2) by a largely non-Platonic conception of νοῦς. Plato in the *Tim.* gives no sort of real being to the material principle, Aristotle conceived it as genuine, even a solid factor in natural reality. "Aristotle is, in fact, a dualist, which Plato is not." As for νοῦς, Plato thinks of it in active, intentionalist terms. The object of thought is not viewed as existing in the thinking mind. That is rather the case with αἴσθησις (*Th.* 156a-157a; *Tim.* 61e-69a). Plato's theory of sense-qualities is taken over by Aristotle: these qualities are affections of a material sense-organ; thus they come into being within the mind. Now in Aristotle's view something similar happens to the Mind in thinking: the *Eide* of objects are received into the Mind (*De an.* 429b29-430a2). At the end Aristotle compares this reception of the *Eide* to the action of a hand which employs the *Eide* as tools, presumably to reach out to further objects (432a1-2). Fi. judges: "Aristotle's theory of Mind, while it may be full of insights, is also full of confusions. It is very hard to say how far it diverges from that of Plato" (Fi., 363).

However, Plato believed in an eidetic Intellect which was eternally correlated with the whole system of the *Eide*. It was in fact "the Idea of the comprehensive vision of them all". That is, Fi. declares, "the Demiurgic Thinkingness of the *Tim.*, which is reponsible alike for the being of the Soul and its actual thought in time, and for the objects, intelligible or sensible, which those thoughts concern".

This is an interpretation of what Plato in the *Tim.* called "the Demiurge". Fi. expressly avoids speaking of a Divine Mind that "contains" the *Eide* as its objects and chooses to speak of a Divine Mind "eternally related to the Eide". In fact, this wording appears to be a more faithful rendering of what Plato said. No doubt, Plato chose on purpose a mythologizing form of expression. Yet he clearly presented his Demiurge as a transcendent Mind, and this while leaving its relation to "the divine Example" unspecified. Fi. specifies it by somehow "hypostasizing" the Divine Mind and presenting it as a thinking Subject related to the *Eide* as its eternal Object, an Object which, however, is not to be situated "in" the Divine Mind and thereby factually identified with it, but in a way distinguished from it and placed over against it[15].

When reflecting on this, I think we have to conclude that a different "development" of Plato's thought is possible: such a development as has been made in principle since Philo, Clement and Origen, and more

[15] This is, as a matter of fact, how Findlay (365) described the "Demiurgic Thinkingness" of the *Tim.*: "an all-comprehensive Eidos standing over against, and so holding together, all the Eide".

elaborately by St. Augustine. It was this development which was taken over by Thomas Aquinas, whose metaphysics of transcendent Being Fi. rightly characterized as truly Platonic. He dealt with it in an admirable section of his very important ch. IX, entitled "Appraisal of Platonism and its influence" (389-395).

Taking up this chapter at p. 363 we find Fi. declaring that Aristotle transformed the Demiurgic Thinkingness of the *Tim.* into a single mind, or an assemblage of single minds, "which he tried to conceive of as instantial". What he means by this, is apparently the following. Aristotle in fact held that we have to depart from the field of concrete, natural reality. He denied any substantial reality to transcendent Eidetic Forms. Yet, individual concrete minds were conceived by him as "instantiations", apparently of the one Divine Mind, which is more amply described in *Metaph.* Λ 7 and 9.

It is interesting to see how Fi. arrives at thus combining *De an.* III 5,430a10-25 with *Metaph.* Λ 7. After having first described the thinking mind (of man) in Aristotle's view as "being acted upon" by the intelligible object, while being receptive of the Eide with which it is identified—the νοῦς δυνάμει "*becomes* all things"—he finds that the active νοῦς which is assumed as its natural counterpart, proves to "*make* all things", thereby realizing the process of actual thinking.

Fi. explains: *Even in the Soul* there must be a factor which, standing as full actuality does to potency, "*makes* all the Eide", presumably qua objects of thinking, and so is able to raise our inferior intellect from mere potency to full actuality. Here Fi. remembers *Tim.* 90a-d, where the thinking νοῦς is represented as dwelling in us as a kind of divine Being (a *daimon*), a God-in-us whom we have to cultivate and honour by living an intense intellectual life in search of Truth,—according to Fi.'s description a private daimon, whom the intellectual can consult when faced by problems. "The strange doctrine here set forth seems, however, to hang together with the statements regarding the thought of God in *Metaph.* XII, and one is overwhelmingly moved to think ... that it is the Divine Intellect which is also, as affecting the Soul, the Active Intellect of that Soul, which always envisages the total spread of the Eide."

If one would object that in *Metaph.* Λ 7 and 9 Divine Thought is explicitly said to be merely concerned with itself, excluding any object of an inferior order, Fi. replies that for Aristotle (1072b17-23) Divine Thinking is identical with its object—"thought shares the nature of its object, for it becomes a νοητόν in coming into contact with and thinking its objects"—and so the Divine Mind *is* all the Eide, and the Eide "in their full systematic development" *are* the Divine Mind.

Comparing this view of the Divine Mind with Plato's conception of "Demiurgic Thinkingness", Fi. (365) with a slight reservation concludes in a cautious formula: "It would appear arguable that both philosophers are here dealing with Mind as Such".—The difference between Plato and Aristotle would not so much lie in the fact that Aristotle rejected the existence of transcendent Eide altogether, but rather in that he did not enter into Plato's mathematization of the Eide.

When considering Fi.'s rather classical-traditional argument on the Divine Mind in *Metaph.* Λ, I find it mistaken on three points: first, in starting from a false suppositum, second in neglecting a whole piece of evidence in Aristotle, third, in arriving at a false conclusion. The matter is important enough to go through these three elements.

(1) Aristotle is supposed to have handled the human mind as being of the same kind as and on a level with the Divine Mind. Now this cannot be said to be necessarily implied in the text. On the contrary, it runs against it. In the description of the Divine Mind given in *Metaph.* Λ 7,1072b18-30, the distinction is made right at the beginning: "And Thinking-in-itself has as its object that which is best in itself."—Here "Thinking-in-itself", absolute Thought, is opposed to any other kind of thinking, which is that of human beings which depends on sense and imagination[16]. In *De an.* III 5,429b26 the question was asked whether the mind itself can be an object of thought. Aristotle replies to it in 430a2 saying: Yes, νοῦς too can be an object of thought, just as other objects of thinking. This is possible, for in the case of pure intelligibles (things without ὕλη) the thinking mind and its object are identical.—"That which is best in itself" (1072b19), what else could it be but the Divine Mind itself? "It can be an object of thought", Aristotle says, "for the purely Intelligible does not differ from the thinking Mind". 1072b19-21: "The Mind thinks on itself by sharing the nature of its object. For it becomes intelligible by the actual process of thinking. Thus the Mind and its object are the same"[17].

The ll. 22-24 describe the nature and scope of the thinking mind in general: Mind is that which is receptive of the intelligible, which is the essence (οὐσία) of natural things, and it is active when it possesses its object. Therefore the possession rather than the receptivity is the divine element which νοῦς seems to contain, and the act of contemplation is what is most pleasant and best[18].

(ll. 24-26) Aristotle now turns again to the Divine or absolute *Noûs.* "If then God is always in that good state in which we sometimes are, this

[16] See W. D. Ross's Commentary on the *Metaph.*, vol. II, 379.

[17] More explicitly: The actual process of thinking brings the mind almost literally into contact with its object, "so that there is identity of νοῦς and the νοητόν".

[18] I am essentially following Ross's translation.

compels our wonder; and if in a better, this compels it yet more. And God *is* in a better state".

(ll. 26-30) "And life also belongs to God; for the fully developed activity of thought is life, and God is that full activity[19]. And His full activity-in-itself is the best life and eternal life. Therefore we say that God is a living being, eternal and most good, so that life and duration continuous and eternal belong to God. For this is God."

The distance between the Divine Mind and the human mind is clearly marked. The object of Divine Thinking is "that which is best-in-itself". Is it justified here to pass almost imperceptibly from the "perfect" and absolute object which is the Divine *Noûs* itself, to "all the Eide"? It is the character of the νοητόν which as the object of thought is as a unity taken together in a synthetic view of "Divine Being". Yet, is this truly what Aristotle meant? Did he really mean that "*God*" in the full and supreme sense—Divine Thinking, dependent on nothing but itself, absolute, concerned with nothing but itself—included in its thinking the multiplicity of eidetic Forms which by their exemplary Being are the archetypes of the structures of all things in the world? If that was really what he meant, Aristotle would have reintroduced the transcendent Forms of Plato—which he had explicitly rejected—into his concept of the Divine Mind. Certainly, this would have been a most satisfactory synthesis, and the one which alone would have opened to him the possibility of giving a real and satisfactory explanation of the universe. Yet, I think, he did not mean this. What he meant was apparently that exclusive self-intention which is expressed in the formula τοῦ καθ' αὑτὸ ἀρίστου, still underlined and if possible reinforced by the words καὶ ἡ μάλιστα τοῦ μάλιστα. Aristotle *wants* to speak of That which is at the top, insuperable, almost on an inaccessible height.

(2) One neglects a great deal of evidence if one speaks on "the Divine Mind", or "the Eidetic Mind", in Aristotle without a word about the fact that for this philosopher the ἀκίνητος οὐσία was a collective notion, containing a whole number of purely spiritual beings which as such transcend the order of Nature. It will not do to say that the ch. Λ 8, in which the number of these divine Beings—for Aristotle sees them as such—is precisely fixed and their function in the order of the universe described, is a later addition to the system of Aristotle's theology and is better left out if one wants to get a clear view of what Aristotle's theology was like. It is not so that the conception of a plurality of purely spiritual

[19] Ross translated ἐνέργεια by "actuality", a term that has its technical meaning for those who are familiar with Aristotle's language. From the point of view of current modern English it is preferable to render the meaning of the term in descriptive ordinary words.

beings would be a rather unorganic element in Aristotle's metaphysical system, later inserted into an originally monotheistic conception and not really fitting into it, nor is *Metaph.* Λ 8 the only passage where it occurs. E 1,1026a16, a27-30, and Λ 1,1069a30-b2, taken up in Λ 6,1071b3-5, rather give the impression that to Aristotle it was quite normal to suppose the existence of a plurality of such purely spiritual beings. Likewise *Phys.* VIII 6,258b10-11, starts with supposing a plurality. Only somewhat further on the author gives his preference to assuming just one ἀκίνητον (259a8). Now this book VIII of the *Phys.* is nowadays generally dated late, while *Metaph.* Λ might belong to an earlier period. Anyhow, Aristotle's reference to a plurality of purely spiritual beings are too frequent and too natural to just ignore them. *Metaph.* Λ 8 provides us with the picture of a whole series of ἀκίνητα, extending from beyond the outward heaven down to the moon. Aristotle explicitly declares them to be gods (1074b2-3).

The active Intellect of man, too, is "divine": it has come to us "from without" and is supposed to return to those regions where it has come from, when the human σύνθετον of soul and body will have perished. Where did it come from and to which regions will it return?

No doubt it is reasonable to suppose that it will ascend to the first celestial sphere one comes to, when travelling upward through the heavenly spheres, and that will be the sphere of the moon. It is certainly highly improbable that Aristotle, while thinking about the ἀκίνητα as he did, would have connected the human Intellect immediately with that ultimate cause of all motion which was the Prime Mover whom he called "God" in the highest sense. Why should he? Coming "from without" and returning to the realm from whence it came, the νοῦς of man must certainly "ascend" to a higher level. But its transcendency with regard to our world will be a first stage transcendency. This seems involved in the logic of Aristotle's system of ἀκίνητα.

How is it that a modern scholar such as Fi. still does what Medieval Augustinians used to do: making the human active Mind a direct offspring of God? Medieval Augustinians could do so in their own conviction that the human soul is immediately created by God, after His image and likeness. They did not bother about Aristotle's doctrine of purely spiritual Beings, at least not in this context[20]. For a modern scholar this

[20] Christians used to identify Aristotle's Unmoved Movers of the heavenly spheres with the angels, a process of syncretism which took its origin as early as the Neoplatonist school of late Antiquity and with the Alexandrian and Syrian commentators on Aristotle, who were followed by the Arabic philosophers. It was Avicenna who took the divinity of the ἀκίνητα so seriously that he came to answer the question of "whence comes the Active Intellect?" just as I proposed it here. Cf. my contribution to the Second Symposium

should be different. When interpreting Aristotle he is bound to keep to Aristotle's way of thinking. How is it that Fi. neglects such an important part of Aristotelian theology by just ignoring the whole matter of the ἀκίνητα?

I think this is to be comprehended by his own conception of "the Mind as Such"—*der absolute Geist* (Hegel)—of which all human minds are "instantiations". From this point of view the relation of the Divine and the human Mind is an immediate one. Hence, the modern philosopher can bridge the gulf between human minds and the Divine Mind with an ease that is almost shocking to a non-Hegelian. As for Aristotle, his conception of a hierarchy of purely spiritual Beings is certainly of the greatest importance if one wishes to understand how that Greek philosopher could come to answer the question of *whence* the active *Noûs* comes down to man. Only with Hegel the intermediance of other ἀκίνητα is not felt either as a need or as a highly interesting subject.

(3) Fi.'s conclusion that Aristotle's conception of the Divine Mind was almost the same as Plato's idea of Demiurgic Thinkingness proved to be drawn from a mis-interpreted section in *Metaph.* Λ 7. One can say, of course, Plato and Aristotle were both concerned with "Mind as Such". However, the notion differs in its contents in an essential way on the one side from the other. No doubt, philosophers from St. Thomas up to Brentano and from Brentano up to our contemporary H. J. Krämer, who on this topic revised his initial view (expounded in *APA*, 1959) in his second opus magnum (*UGM*, 1964), not so seldom understood the self-knowledge of the Divine Mind in Aristotle as including knowledge of our world in its intelligible essence. Among philosophers this may even be called the "classical" interpretation[21]. Philologists with their historical realism, however, must oppose it. I think they actually remain closer to the thought of the historical Aristotle.

6. *No dualism.* We have seen Fi.'s vigorous protest against the habitual way of attributing a two-worlds-theory to Plato. That is one way of speaking of Platonic dualism, and a very tough one. But what about the two Ultimate Principles? They hardly enter into the traditional picture of what Plato's philosophy was like. On the other hand, those who take the later testimonies on Plato's doctrines seriously are confronted with the

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Aristotelicum, held at Louvain 1960, "La méthode d'Aristote en métaphysique d'après Metaph. A 1-2", in: *Aristote et les problèmes de méthode*, Louvain-Paris 1961, 147-170, espec. 164 and 168.

[21] An interesting defense of it was given by H. J. Krämer, "Grundfragen der aristotelischen Theol., I, Die Noesis noesios bei Aristot.", in: *Theol. u. Philos.* 55 (1969), 363-382.

problem. Heinrich Gomperz in particular placed a strong emphasis on the dualistic character of Plato's philosophy, since in it all things were ultimately derived from two autonomous principles. H. J. Krämer (1959) followed his lead. Fi. on the contrary, rejects this view completely. After stating that the indefinite Principle has its function not only with reference to the sensible world, but on the eidetic level as well, he concludes (324): "The dualism of ἀρχαί, of basic Principles, which runs through Plato, and which is solemnly documented by Aristotle, really reduces to a monism. One of the ἀρχαί is really no ἀρχή at all, but a mere shadow of the other. *The One is really responsible for everything.*" And again (324f.):

"The negative or empty Principle which in the eidetic sphere specifies, in the instantial sphere instantiates, is merely the extrinsic side of absolute Unity, a side as necessary to it, as what it is καθ' αὑτό or in and for itself."

The picture might seem to be a highly plausible one, the more so because for Plato, as a matter of fact, the Twoness was certainly never of the same level as the One. Therefore, we can agree with Fi. in his vigorous denial of a Platonic dualism, in so far at least that there is no question of two equal principles standing the one against the other. Yet, it is not superfluous to set up a few *canones* in order to prevent misunderstandings.

(1) The Dyad cannot be placed on an equal rank side by side with the One.

(2) It cannot be *derived* from the One either, since it was conceived as an autonomous Principle.

(3) Nor can it be, so to speak, taken back into or *absorbed* by the First Principle, the One being in fact the only and all-embracing Source of everything.

I am afraid Fi. tends the third way, as will appear more clearly in his sympathy for the Late Medieval ps.-Platonism of Meister Eckhardt, who established a mutual dependence of the world on God and of God on the world—which is definitely unplatonic—and for Hegel, who came to declare that the Absolute = the "Nothing". We are very far from Plato here, and from Plotinus just as far. He never made or could have made such an equation.

Of course it is difficult to give a correct description of the place of Plato's Second Principle. Describing it as "the extrinsic side of absolute Unity" might seem a not incorrect rendering of the philosopher's intention. Yet, the implied idea of essential necessity does involve the danger of later aberrations. Leaving the Dyad quite unexplained as a secondary Principle, which does work on the eidetic level of Being, providing the

condition for its multiple Forms, subordinated to the One, yet somehow working independently,—however unsatisfactory it might appear, that is what we have to do[22].

Neoplatonism

Let us now turn to a somewhat more close inspection of Fi.'s important chapter on the Influence of Platonism. He gave it the title of "Appraisal of Platonism". And so it could indeed be introduced to the reader. After Aristotle it is Neoplatonism, that asks our attention. It is certainly right that the Neoplatonist philosophers—at least if he means Plotinus and his immediate successors—"are much more truly Platonic than they are usually taken to be". "Usually" refers to the nineteenth-century German "historisch-kritische Methode", which had its scientific merits but had the methodical errors of overcriticism as well. Moreover, it was not infrequently hampered by the scientistic bias of rationalism, a mentality which, *mutatis mutandis*, has not lost its grip on the mind of present-day scholars, particularly in those circles that are deeply affected by logical positivism. It must stem from a rather old-fashioned rationalist approach to ancient philosophy when Fi. first of all mentions Philo of Alexandria as an intermediary between Plato and Neoplatonism. This is, so to speak, seen from a distance,—the enormous distance of some twenty centuries. As a matter of fact, Philo, however hellenized his thinking, came out of the Jewish tradition, with its belief in the one and almighty God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Plotinus came from a quite different tradition.

That the doctrine of the three hypostases as expounded again and again in Plotinus' treatises, is, on the whole, indeed "what one arrives at if one meditates on the major speculative passages in Plato's written

[22] It is interesting to read H. J. Krämer on Fi.'s *Plato*-book of '74 in: *Philos. Rundschau* 27 (1980), pp. 25-29, espec. p. 27 (small print). He renders Fi.'s account of the "Second Principle" as follows:—"das Gegenprinzip (die Dyas des Gross-Kleinen) ist lediglich die schattenhafte nichtige Privation des Einen-Guten und daher ohne eigene Subsistenz (324, 361, 400)." To which he remarks: "Das Gegenprinzip ist zwar mit dem Einen-Guten nicht gleichrangig, aber doch mittelbar konstituierend für Seiendes, Wahres und Werthaftes und daher wie das Eine vor-seiend (genauer: unter-seiend wie jenes über-seiend). Die duale Grundstruktur ist für Platons Weltentwurf fundamental (vgl. neben den ἄγραφα δόγματα den *Parm.* und den *Phil.*) und lässt sich nicht eigentlich monistisch reduzieren."
I think, the "more precise" description of the relation of the two Principles is fairly well done here. However, the "dualist" tendency of Plato's philosophy is clearly overrated: it is true that the Second Principle can neither be reduced to nor derived from the First, yet it has definitely a subordinate place. Cf. my ch. on Plato's dualism, section 3; in the present ch. my "three canones", p. 83.

work" (Fi., 377), is, I think, essentially correct. It is what I defended from 1936 onward and what I still wish to defend. I have a high opinion of Plotinus as a philosopher. In the 6 × 9 treatises which Porphyry handed down to us we have the privilege and the joy of sharing an intense and profound reflection on all essential problems of metaphysics, of man—body and soul—and God, of the universe and its order, of human life, its trials and its goal. It is all very real, very living. And the man behind it stands before us as an example of human life in the best and most inspiring sense, a life together with others and always open to their problems, and at the same time always innerly directed towards God and penetrated by the thought of His Presence and Reality.

I have the impression that Fi. more or less underrates Plotinus, while overestimating Proclus, "the great Proclus" (Fi. 378), as he says. This particularly high esteem for Proclus, his *Elementa Theol.* and his *Theol. Platonica*, is, no doubt, a typically Hegelian feature.

He can follow St. Augustine for a stretch. But there are limits. In so far as the Eidetic world is basically understood by Augustine, and understood as being of the Mind of God, in so far as that Mind is in a way accessible to ours, Fi. feels congenial to Augustine's philosophical thought. But the Church Father had a great feeling for the Deus absconditus and a profound experience of divine grace. Augustine goes astray, so the modern philosopher declares, in accepting Divine Arbitrariness, prevenient grace, majority damnation, by absolutely insisting on nugatory ceremonial performances (!) and refusing to recognize pagan virtues. All that "gives the thought of Augustine what can only be called *its monstrous character*". Fi. finds fault with Divine Providence "in letting the great, perverse African loose upon mankind..." (385).

Fortunately the same Providence acted more successfully in the next century, when permitting the fraud of an unknown, probably Syrian monk, who pretended to be the Dionysius the Areopagite whom Paul converted on his visit to Athens. "By so doing it allowed *a stream of the purest Platonism* to irrigate the whole subsequent course of medieval thought." After this it is a true refreshment to read the sober and critical account of E. R. Dodds in his Introduction to Proclus' *Elem. Theol.*

No wonder, however, we find Fi. awarding Scotus Eriugena with the most honourable palm of victory; his *Division of Nature*, so he thinks, is in some ways *the purest statement of Platonism ever put forward.* In what respects is it so? First, "in that he accords no shadow of independent substantiality either to the Eide, through which God's creativity operates" (we remember no. 4 of the few specific features of Fi.'s Platonism dealt with above: "Plato did not really believe in Ideas"), "or to the instances in

which these Eide terminate, while making God *also* so above everything of which He is the creative essence, and so set in His own uncreative Self-abidingness, as to give a new and strangely pregnant meaning to the creation of all things out of Nothing''.

Next, ''in making man's knowledge of God be God's *self*-revelation in them''. Fi. can welcome here an anticipation of Hegel whose background, none the less, was so different from that of Scotus, that it is quite possible that the latter did not really deviate from the Christian belief in God the Creator who made man in His image and likeness, while Hegel as a matter of fact took the same words in a much more pretentious sense.

Aquinas, too, may rejoice in Fi.'s favour, and even greatly so. Thomas quarrelled with what he thought to be Platonism, a picture that came down to him from Aristotle's *Metaph.*, which he was not able to correct, since the necessary materials failed him. Nevertheless, Thomas was a Platonist in his own metaphysics. In stating this Fi. is right. We owe him the elegant formula: ''The hands are Aristotle's, but the voice is that of Proclus or Plato.''

Fi. comes to his dictum at the end of a reflection on Thomas' description of the Divine Intelligence and Will (393-395). He writes: ''While Plato in his later stoicheiology tended to *subordinate* the Eide to a Supreme Principle or Principles which in some transcendental sense give rise to them,''—(To this one marginal note: Not particularly in his later doctrine, but on the very height of his classical dialogues Plato wrote in the *Rep.* (VI 508d-509b) on the *Agathon* as the *Aition* by which *noeta* come to be, while it is itself even beyond intelligible Being)—''Aquinas takes the further step of making the Eide more or less vanish in his First Principle, so that even his Second Hypostasis or Word or Wisdom of the Godhead, which intellectually embraces all the Eide, becomes a more or less equivocally conceived, unreally isolated, aspect of Deity (see, for example, *S.c.g.*, ch. XII).''

This is perhaps saying somewhat too much. Fi. is obviously thinking of *S.c.g.* I 12, where it is argued why the relations to other things cannot be said to be ''realiter'' in God: because if God's very Being and Essence would be identified with such relations, that would make Him dependent on other things. That is, no doubt, why both Plato and Plotinus emphatically placed their First Principle, the One or the Good, beyond intelligible Being which is the totality of ''Forms'' (Eide): by doing so they wanted to prevent that which actually happened to certain more remote offsprings of Neoplatonism such as, for example, Meister Eckhardt—and that modern philosopher who in Fi.'s opinion is the most illustrious and legitimate interpreter of Neoplatonism, *Hegel.* St. Thomas who, as Augustine before him, took from Exod. 3.14 that God is ''qui EST'', was extremely careful on the point.

To the question of ''How the Son of God is said to be God's Wisdom'' Thomas replies in ch. 12 of *S.c.g.* IV by saying: ''God's Wisdom is God's very essence.'' It is the Divine Thinking, which thinks Itself. One might rather not speak of an unreally isolated aspect of Deity here. Fi. himself comments not unworthily on the Divine Intelligence as ''supereminently'' including the ''Forms'' (*Eide*) of all things by being the Power of them all: ''we can see'', so he says, ''in formal terms, just how and why this sort of ''intellection'' both resembles, and also utterly differs from, our ordinary intellection. God, in perfectly understanding the Essence He is, by simply being it, also understands, in virtue of His unlimited powers of instantiation, all the ways in which He might be instantiated.—We should not, however, suppose that the natures of instantial things exist in clear distinction in this Divine Intelligence.''

In this, Fi. thinks, St. Thomas differed from both Plato and Plotinus—who, none the less, never identified their First Principle with intelligible Being, caused by it. The problem of how to maintain Divine Unity arises as soon as the Second is equalled to the First, and the possibility of an answer lies probably in the fact that equal rank does not imply total identification.

Fi. renders Thomas' account of the Divine Will by saying: it is the Divine Essence willing its own perfection, primarily by actually being it in its fullness, and secondarily and in a non-necessary manner ''willing this perfection to be instantiated in this or that imperfect set of actual instances by in fact *being* thus instantiated'' (*S.c.g.* I, ch. 75-76). ''God, being the perfect Essence, also is the active Power which can and does realize itself in innumerable, distinct, limited fashions, the creatures which dimly participate in, or imitate His perfection, without, however, being able to import real division into His essential simplicity''. Fi. calls this ''a fascinatingly skillful development''.

The description leaves us in a certain perplexity. Why? Well, the constant use of the terms ''instances'' and ''instantiation'', the repeated suggestion that God ''realizes Himself by being thus instantiated'' makes us feel uncomfortable. For it suggests that created things somehow ''realize'' the one Divine Essence which is God. And this is certainly not the case. Moreover, it is certainly not what St. Thomas meant. Plato and Plotinus provided for a due distance between the First Principle and the sensible world. For them there is even quite a distance between noetic Being—which is perfect and divine—and sensible being which, though it *does* have a likeness with its archetypal cause, can cer-

tainly not be called a "realization" of its heavenly example[23]. Something similar is the case of created things as seen by Christians with regard to their Creator. There is a certain resemblance, no doubt. Things created bear an image of the Logos imprinted on them as a seal, St. Athanasius said. And that is an honour for them. Yet, they could not possibly be said to "realize" their Creator. No Christian would have expressed himself in suchlike terms, neither in antiquity nor in our own days,—unless by error.

Fi. is right when finding a Platonic thinking-form in Aquinas. His exquisite formula "The hands are Aristotle's, but the voice is that of Proclus or Plato" deserves our admiration. It leaves only one thing to be desired, namely that Plato should be mentioned first. It should be remembered that Thomas was on no account the first to integrate the Platonic Ideas in God, and that in finding them in the Divine Word and Wisdom whom, according to the tradition of the Christian Church, he acknowledged to be equal to the Father. In this he had been preceded by Augustine who especially in his *De libero arbitrio* II 20, 39, had argued quite explicitly in this manner, an argument in which Number, as being above our individual minds, took an important place.

Augustine, no doubt, was not the first. But in his days he was in this matter the vigorous spokesman of a whole tradition which was alive in the fourth century and went back at least to Origen in his commentary on the prologue of the fourth Gospel. Also the conception of God as Absolute Being which alone *is* its Essence, its Goodness, its Will, is thoroughly Augustinian. Augustine most emphatically joined the *est* of Exod. 3.14 to Plotinus' reflections on the One: Plotinus did not attribute the ἔστι to it[24], but he *did* say, the One *is* its *ousia* and its *energeia*, its will and its goodness; it is *causa sui*, primarily and ὑπερόντως self-identical[25]. It is rather curious, I think, just to pass this whole Augustinian and early Neoplatonist tradition and put it as an innovation by St. Thomas on the account of Proclus and the Dionysian tradition. Anyhow in *S. Th.* I, qu.13, art. 11, in calling God "ipsum esse infinitum", Thomas refers to Joh. Damascenus and to Augustine, while correcting Dionysius in positing that not the "bonum" but the "Qui est" of Exod. 3, 14 is the most proper name of God. This is very Augustinian indeed[26].

[23] I avoid the term "model", which evokes rather different associations.
[24] *Enn.* VI 8,8.12-16.
[25] *Enn.* VI 8,12.1-15, 22-25 (οὐσία and ἐνέργεια); ib. 13.5-8, 27-33 (βούλησις, θέλησις); V 5,13.1-13 (goodness); VI 8,14.38f., 42f. (*causa sui*). I referred to Aquinas after citing these passages in my *Greek Philos.* III, under no. 1393d. The resemblance is striking.
[26] I dealt with the subject of the notion of Absolute Being in Greek thought and the concept of God in the paper "Antike Seinsphilosophie und Christentum", Festschrift Lortz, Baden-Baden 1958, 527-548.

In the quaest. 7 and 10 of *S. Th.* I, by calling God *infinitus* and *aeternus* Thomas again differs notably from Proclus, who placed πέρας and ἄπειρον, the constituents of the ὄντως ὄν, after the First Principle, and eternity after the ὄντως ὄν. Thomas mentions the Ideas repeatedly in his long qu.14, on the Divine knowledge, and deals with them in a separate chapter, qu.15. In both these chapters he refers particularly to Augustine.

When speaking, however, of St. Thomas' integration of the Platonic Ideas into the concept of God we cannot confine ourselves to the exemplaria rerum which are referred to in the above-cited chapters of *S. Th.* I. We all know how important were the notions of goodness and justice to Plato and how in his classical dialogues the ἀγαθόν, καλόν and δίκαιον are first and foremost when the "Theory of Forms" is expounded. It is this vision of a transcendent Good and Beautiful, Just and Equal which is present in Aquinas' doctrine of a *lex aeterna*, expounded in the quaest. 91, a.1-3, and 93 of *S. Th.* II, part 1. Certainly, the notion of lex aeterna has passed through the Stoa where it was conceived as immanent in the Logos penetrating the universe. Cicero in *De legibus* speaks of it with fervour and conviction and defines it in a formula that comes very close indeed to that of St. Thomas' definition[27]. Most striking and famous also among Christians was Cic. *De republ.* III 33, a passage which was quoted by Lactantius, *Div. inst.* VI 8. As to the contents it goes back to Plato, *Laws* IV 713e-714a, as I remarked elsewhere[28]. Only in Plato the lex sempiterna et immutabilis, valid for all men without exception, stems from a *transcendent* Reason and a transcendent God. St. Thomas found it in St. Augustine, to whose *De lib. arb.* I 6 he refers again and again.

I think, these considerations may offer a somewhat larger perspective than that of those scholars who lately have been inclined to the more restricted view that Aquinas took his Platonism just from the Dionysian-Proclean line of thought, with which he was particularly concerned in the years 1268-1272, when reading and commenting on the *Liber de Causis* and its source, the *Elements of Theology* of Proclus, available to him in the then quite recent translation by William van Moerbeke. However interesting that work may be—I gave my "Reflections" on the *L.d.C.* in *Vivarium* 1966, after having spoken about it in a conference held for the Japanese Society for Medieval Studies at Tokyo and also for

[27] Cicero, *De leg.* I 6,13 and II 4,8. The text of both passages is found in my *Gr. Philos.* III, no. 1066a and b.
[28] In *Gr. Philos.* III, under no. 1066c, in which the text of Cic., *Rep.* III 33 is cited in full.

the Thomas Aquinas Institute at Kyoto[29]—it must be noticed here that Dr. Klaus Kremer in his work on the Neoplatonic philosophy of Being and its influence on Aquinas (1966)[30] gave a considerable support to Fi.'s view by making a one-sided approach to Thomas. This is not the place to go further into Kremer's work. I shall give my critical notes to it elsewhere[31]. As for the *Liber de Causis*, it must be observed that Thomas certainly did not come to a true understanding of the Platonic Ideas by reading that work. He clearly appears to have learned more from St. Augustine, from whom he took the conception of Ideas in the mind of God, both in the sense of exemplaria rerum and in that of a lex aeterna.

Anyhow, Fi. states that Aquinas is obviously performing the same ideal and real "generation" of Forms from an ultimate source that Plato and the Platonists attempted. "Only Aquinas goes further than Plato", so he thinks, "in making Essence, in its supreme form, the active cause of everything, in making it quite transcend ideal as well as real Being, and transcend Mind and Power and Will, as something better than all of them."

This is still more exactly what Plato taught than Fi. seems to suppose. For in fact, this is the supreme transcendency of Plato's ἀγαθόν of *Rep.* 508-9, which was indeed meant to be the ultimate and total cause of everything: of intelligible Being first and immediately, and of sensible being indirectly. Yes, Aquinas went further than Plato: in that he uses the name of God, which Plato never used, in speaking of the ultimate Cause; moreover, in speaking of that Cause in the terms of Exod. 3, "Aquinas, we may say, represents a Platonism in which the Idea of Good has become absolutely all-in-all, so that all inferior Hypostases are lost in its light."

To this beautiful description which we cannot correct, Fi. adds the following interesting judgment:

"The supreme merit of this Medieval Platonism lay, however, in its preservation of the rational values and excellences from an arbitrary, instantialist taint. For a God who wills His own essence, and whose essence is Truth and Goodness, cannot will the selfcontradictory or the

[29] The *Reflections on the Liber de Causis*, published in *Vivarium* 4 (1966), 67-82. The paper appeared in Japanese together with the translated text of eight other conferences given by me to five universities in Japan, Nov. 1966, in the vol. entitled *Girishiya tetsugaku to shūkyō* (Greek Philos. and Religion), Tokyo 1969.

[30] Klaus Kremer, *Die Neu-Platonische Seinsphilosophie und ihre Wirkung auf Thomas v. Aquin*, Leiden 1966.

[31] "Deus Creator omnium: Plato and Aristotle in Aquinas' doctrine of God", in: *Graceful Reason.* Essays in Ancient and ME Philos. presented to Jos. Owens CSSR., ed. L. Gerson, Toronto 1983, 203-227; espec. 216ff., with n. 27.

intrinsically immoral, what is contrary to Reason or the "Natural Law". The free exercises of the Divine Power will, without constraint, fall *within* those essential limits."

In later theologies, Fi. thinks, those essential limits were violated and God was made what he calls "an instantial God". One may apply this assessment to whatever philosophy or theology one thinks it does apply to. What is interesting is the way in which Aquinas' doctrine has here been rendered and evaluated. What is essential to Platonism is its belief in the reality and power of Eide and eidetic connections. Therefore, Russell and G. E. Moore were for Fi. true Platonists, much more so than the 17th-century Cambridge Platonists Cudworth and H. More, and most of all Hegel seems to him a true Platonist, much more so than, for example, Ficino and Thomas Taylor.

True Platonism is also found in Fi.'s view in Meister Eckhardt's German theology. With enthusiasm Fi. welcomes the doctrine that "the whole power to descend into instantiation" is not only part and parcel of the Supreme Principle of Essence, but also becomes *necessary* to that Principle. God, the utterly transcendent Essence, is nevertheless the indwelling Essence in Creatures. God's Being involves an essential procession or process from and to Himself. Yes, it may be said that in finite spirits the Divine Essence reveals itself to itself.

This is indeed how Hegel speculates about created being: God, the absolute Spirit, realizes Himself in them. Is it true Platonism? No, it is not the Platonism of Plato, and I think not of Plotinus either. It is of course a "development" of Platonism. But a development which essentially deviates from those ancient thinkers, who were so deeply aware of the distance between the First and that which comes "after" it. They never could have said that the First itself is by its essence present in finite things, even in finite spirits. They certainly did not make the First Cause, say "God", depend on "what comes after Him", say "creation", and never forgot the absolute uniqueness and transcendency of the First.

Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Diamat

Fi. is an able and very serious opponent of Wittgenstein and his analysis of ordinary language, in so far as this either ignores or denies metaphysical reality. No Platonist, so he says (405), could ever accept the inconceivably simplified accounts of the manner in which our basic terms are given meaning. However, what is most radically opposed to Platonism is the materialistic instantialism of a mechanistic science, which throughout makes the works of Mind parasitic upon the works of

Necessity. Here Fi. is splendid. This is, so he says, basing high-grade eidetic connections on the lowest-grade interactions of dumb particulars. That is *monstrous*: it goes against the grain of reason (411).

In his final pages Fi. speaks a word in favour of a Platonic idealism which at the top remains impersonal, opposing this to a kind of idealism of the theistically "subjective" type. A theistic God is, so he says, always an "instantial" God. Platonism locates Godhead beyond God, the Divine Dark beyond the luminous creative Wisdom. And that is in his opinion what the best Christian theologians always did.

Platonism has, however, other rivals of a non-idealistic stamp. The most formidable of these seems to be that philosophical orientation which refuses to absolutize anything. It is willing to adopt different principles in different fields, and a plurality of principles and methods in a single field, but does not attempt to reduce them to something simple and single. It is willing to use eidetic insights in some fields, but is crassly empirical in others and does not expect that all might be seen as radiating from a single centre, or as making a single structure or sense. In Antiquity Aristotelism was a kind of pluralism of that type, and in the Middle Ages Scotism and Occamism were. In our days, it is with Heidegger that we find that kind of disjunction, pluralism and absence of inclusive sense. Thus, Heidegger compares human life to a series of tracks which meander about and then lose themselves in a forest (*Holzwege*). Fi., with one of his wonderful qualifications, calls this travelling along *a well-paved highway of despair*, towards a predetermined frustration.

However, the most truly formidable rival of Platonism is that modern system of materialism which, as I cited before, "makes the works of Mind parasitic upon the works of Necessity", "a barbarized science and politics", which does not recognize eidetic patterns rooted in an ultimate Unity. But a science which sees all things in terms of manipulative mechanism must be transient: it cannot live and be accepted by mankind. Something like Platonism may well dominate the science and practice of the future.

Platonism: a hopeful message

This is the hopeful message of Fi.'s memorable work, a work which, no doubt, has its failures and deficiencies, but has these as shadows of really brilliant and outstanding lights.

CHAPTER THREE

NOTES TO W. K. C. GUTHRIE'S PLATO

1. W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, volume IV, *Plato, the man and his dialogues, Earlier period*, Cambridge 1975.*

Half a century ago A. E. Taylor's volume *Plato, the man and his work*, appeared in London. Guthrie's fourth volume recalls it in its title, *Plato, the man and his dialogues*. The word "dialogues" has got a particular emphasis. For Guthrie Plato's philosophy is essentially realized in this dramatic literary form. Of course the dialogues include quite an element of play. None the less, or rather for this very reason the dialogues are actually Plato's way of philosophizing. They are the living image of dialectical discussion itself. In this Guthrie joins H. Gundert's exposition in *Der platonische Dialog* (Heidelberg 1968), unconsciously joining E. de Strycker, whose work *De kunst van het gesprek. Wat waren de dialogen van Plato?* appeared at Antwerp, 1976. "Plato spoke the plain truth when he said that there was not, and would never be, any "treatise" (σύγγραμμα or τέχνη) of his on the things that he took seriously", Guthrie assures us (65). In this, I think, we can agree with him, though making the reservation that by this statement the whole matter of the ἄγραφα is not yet settled, and that, after all, it is rather a simplistic solution to think that Plato's oral teaching in the Academy did not contain anything beyond what we can read in the dialogues.

Phaedr. 274bff. has been frequently cited as a radical disparagement of any written work. Did Plato really not attach any value to his dialogues? Guthrie discusses the matter judiciously (56-64). He points out that in Plato's time there was a controversy about whether public speeches should be written down or not. Plato was deeply concerned with this current controversy, since it had a bearing on his own writing of dialogues. Guthrie also inquires into the meaning of *paidia* for Plato. He concludes that for him it had a considerable value, and was not at all opposed to serious work. For Plato, then, the dialogues were certainly not unimportant, as some contemporary authors think they were.

After two more or less introductory chapters on Plato's life and on the dialogues in general Guthrie gives separate treatise to each of the dialogues. His comments are always interesting. The first surprise of-

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* These notes were used in a review which appeared in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 36 (1979), 271-274. They were revised from a mere formal point of view.

fered to the reader is: to find the list of Socratica minora, here presented as "Early Socratic dialogues", headed by the *Apology* and, moreover, to find the *Apology* accepted as being a most faithful rendering of Socrates' own historical speech, held before his judges. Guthrie does not think that Plato wrote any Socratic dialogues before the death of Socrates. In this he dismisses an older, not impossible hypothesis, advocated in particular by Wilamowitz, who thought that quite a number of Socratic dialogues may have been produced at an earlier date. As to the historicity of the speech, Guthrie sides with the earlier English tradition of John Burnet and A. E. Taylor.

On the whole, in this group of particularly "Socratic" dialogues, including the *Lysis* and the *Charmides*, Guthrie does not find anything of a metaphysical hypothesis of "Forms". It is a search for the one εἶδος, and this has a *logical* meaning. In some passages the terminology gave rise to misunderstanding on the part of modern scholars, e.g. the pages about the πρῶτον φίλον in the *Lysis*, such an expression as the παρουσία τοῦ καλοῦ "by which all beautiful things are beautiful" in the *Hippias Mai.* (287c), and similar expressions in the *Euthyphro*. They sound very much like *Phaedo* 100d, yet are essentially different, because "the addition of transcendence" is not yet made in the earlier dialogues.

Guthrie enjoys immensely the way in which a character as Euthyphro is depicted in the dialogue of that name, but he is not satisfied with the *Lysis*. While in other dialogues, such as the *Laches* and the *Charmides*, Socrates gives a lesson in correct thinking, in the *Lysis* he fails to do so. He does not correct the boys he is discussing with, when they make mistakes, and even by his questions leads them into further confusion. From the point of view of education this is a very bad method. At the end of this section (154) Guthrie cites Aristotle as a corrector of Plato's Socrates in the *Lysis*: in his discussion of φιλία in *EN* VIII Aristotle has cleared up many of the confusions left by Socrates in that dialogue. One may say so. However, Guthrie's approach to the *Lysis* is rather severe: for him a Socratic dialogue must fit into a certain pattern. Unfortunately Plato's dialogues not always do. In the present case Socrates does not even demand a general definition of the φίλον, but keeps to the concrete question of "How do two people become friends?". Isn't it shocking? G. thinks indeed it is.

If the standard is the "model" of a Socratic *elenchos*, his criticism is justified. On the other hand, granting that Plato had the right of sometimes composing a talk of a different kind, we can see that in the present case he did not aim at direct "solutions". Moreover, we can see that in the *Lysis* very real *questions* have been raised, and even that the notion of the πρῶτον φίλον is not so superficial. True, it is not described

as the one form which runs through all concrete φίλα, making them such as they are. But it is described as the τέλος (219c-d), the true object of love, ἐκεῖνο αὐτό for the sake of which all other things are loved (220b). And by this we are not far from the *Symposium*. There the statement will be made that *eros* presupposes a need; here (in the *Lysis*) it is said that *philia* presupposes an οἰκεῖον. That is not superficial, it is profound. The view of the *Lysis* completes that of the *Symposium*.

In this case Guthrie appears to have somewhat underrated the more or less intuitive insights of unsophisticated partners in a dialogue. Did not the same happen to him with reference to that naive man Euthyphro, who thought to have such a precise knowledge about what was and what was not acting "piously"? To be sure, there was a good deal of naive self-confidence in that simple man. But what escaped Guthrie's attention is, that, none the less, this man had an idea of "piety" which was so essentially correct, that a Christian of our days could hardly have given a better definition. Or what else should we say of a man defining "piety" by: "Pious is what pleases God" ("the gods"), which he explains by "serving God as his lord", and finally, when pressed about the character of the service: "it is a matter of giving them (Euthyphro uses the plural where a Christian would use the singular) honour, respect and pleasure".—We can say nothing against that. Naive or not, this is "piety".

Guthrie does not doubt of the authenticity of the *Hippias Maior.* As "one of the most convincing touches" he quotes the following question, asked by Hippias concerning a supposed interlocutor introduced by Socrates who had asked whether a beautiful pot is a thing of beauty;—on which Hippias: "Who is this uneducated fellow who brings contemptible things like saucepans into a serious discussion?"—A very good argument indeed, and a jolly one.

In the *Hippias Minor* we find Socrates defending the shocking thesis that the man who does willingly wrong is better than the man who does so unwillingly. Is this a sample of conscious dialectical virtuosity, or was Plato duped by his own abstractions? Guthrie does not admit the latter. He thinks that Socrates talked in this way to people who prided themselves on their education and wisdom. Socrates himself did not believe that any man ever acts voluntarily wrong. What else is Plato doing in this dialogue but giving a *reductio ad absurdum* of the consequences if one admits the notion of conscious and voluntary wrong-doing? This was apparently an early attempt of Plato's at defending the well-known Socratic thesis of οὐδεὶς ἑκὼν ἁμαρτάνει.

The *Protagoras*, together with the *Meno* and the *Gorgias* classed in the second group of dialogues, offers another serious problem: in the passage

of "the hedonistic calculus" Socrates advocates a thesis which is clearly incompatible with the ethical standpoint of the *Gorgias* and the *Republic*, as was remarked among others by Dodds. However, something more should have been said here. It is not only incompatible with the *Gorgias* and the *Republic*, but it goes against the picture of Socrates in the *Apology*, the *Crito* and the *Phaedo* as well. It will not do here to say, as Guthrie does, that Socrates' hedonism in the *Protagoras* was not of the "vulgar" kind, but implied a great deal of self-control. This applies to any philosophical Greek hedonism, including Aristippus and Epicurus. But it is a matter of principles. And it must be said that the Socrates of the *Apology* was most emphatically not interested in ἡδονή, but only in "that one's soul would become as good as possible", his own soul and that of others (29d-30a). Rereading such a passage as 28b-e will not leave us the slightest doubt about that. And so it is in the *Crito* and the *Phaedo*. Thus, it will not do either to say that in the *Protagoras* we have Plato's earlier view of the matter, which only in the *Gorgias* would have ripened into an ethically stricter form. No doubt it is better to say that in the *Protagoras* there is an adaptation to a lower level,—for the rest a view by which Protagoras himself is shocked.

It is certainly a good advice to read the *Protagoras* as a brilliant piece of conversation. But I am afraid Guthrie burdens Socrates, and Plato with him, too much with a thesis which, without any doubt was alien to the mind of both of them. Very rightly Guthrie remembers *Phaedo* 69a as a counterpart to the calculus of the *Protagoras*. For one cannot doubt in which of the two passages we have the true Socrates, and in which the true Plato.

In the *Meno* Guthrie finds a new beginning: in this dialogue Plato introduces a religious belief—the Pythagorean doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul—and makes this the basis of a philosophy of his own, assuming the existence of transcendent Forms. In earlier dialogues Guthrie did not find that doctrine. Even if the words were very similar, he did not admit that a doctrine of transcendent Forms existing "separately" was implied,—simply because the whole spiritual background for such a doctrine was lacking. That is different now: in the *Meno* we have the religious doctrine of the immortality of the soul, the notion of a life before and after this life.

Guthrie lays a heavy emphasis on the fact, or rather what seems to him a fact, to wit, that Plato's theory of transcendent Forms took its origin in a religious doctrine. I think that, in putting it this way, he overemphasizes it. As a matter of fact, when Plato gives his own account of how he came to the hypothesis of an archetypal reality, and this a reality of a transcendent order, as he does e.g. in *Phaedo* 100a-101d, we find him

basically concerned with two problems, (1) to find a rational explanation of physical reality, (2) to explain the fact of human knowledge. Under both aspects he "postulates" by logical necessity the existence of αὐτὰ καθ' αὐτά, an absolute Reality, which is always identical with itself. No doubt this "postulate" (hypothesis) leads him to assume the existence of νοητά, by participation of which alone the αἰσθητά can both exist and be known. It is Plato's deep conviction that physical reality can never be explained by itself. This is a rational theory. It leads from physics to meta-physics, from visible things to the invisible, but it does so on rational grounds. That the Reality of the transcendent order is a θεῖον, perfect Being in the full sense, gives a "religious" character to this metaphysics: it leads to "the Divine" and to a *visio beatifica*, as may be found in *Symp.* 211d-212a and *Phaedr.* 247c-e, but its way of approach is that of logical argument. It is an ascent by καλὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα and ἐπιστῆμαι (*Symp.* 210c). This is what we find confirmed in the program of the education of philosophers in *Rep.* VII. Thus, there does not appear sufficient ground to hold that the belief in immortality, which is based on "what was told in the Mysteries" (*Phaedo* 62b and 70c; *Gorg.* 523a), had played in fact such a decisive rôle in the conception of the theory of transcendent forms, as Plato attributed to it.

There is another, still more important reason for remarking that Guthrie overrates the Pythagorean influence—even *Orphico*-Pythagorean!—in this matter. In fact, to assume the existence of a transcendent reality did not follow at all from Pythagorean philosophical principles. On the contrary, the essential difference between Platonism and Pythagoreanism was exactly this: that the Pythagoreans regarded mathematical number in itself as the principle of order both in the cosmic universe and in the life of man, whereas Plato conceived his transcendent forms by postulating the existence of an order, which transcends mathematical principles. Most emphatically Plato did not stop at mathematical "objects", but used mathematical thinking only as a *preparation* of the mind in its search for eternal truth.

Furthermore, the references to "Orphico-Pythagorean" religious doctrine as an explanation of the theory of transcendent Forms is not supported by Aristotle's account in *Metaph.* A 6 either. What Aristotle does mention as a rational ground for Plato's hypothesis is the argument we find e.g. in *Cratylus* 439c6-440b4: that knowledge would be completely impossible unless there is a "solid" object to be known, an object that is not continually shifting but remains what it is.

Apparently Guthrie is rather embarrassed with Plato's transcendent Forms. Does it make sense, after all, to admit degrees of "being", taking this term, as Plato does, in the sense of "reality"? Guthrie takes the

discussion up with Vlastos (496f). First, in referring to *Timaeus* 27d-28a, where things "becoming" (γιγνόμενα) are opposed as "never truly existing" to the full "being" of the intelligible order, he sides with Plato: it is perfectly understandable that he could not recognize the γιγνόμενα as "being" on a level with the perfect and eternal being of the νοητά; he had to give them an intermediate position between ὄν and οὐκ ὄν, since they partook of both. The theory of Forms had the function of saving the phaenomena!

Vlastos, and many Anglo-Saxon philosophers with him, rejects the notion of degrees of reality as absurd, and hence he can hardly accept that Plato actually held that doctrine. Guthrie replies: Plato was not the only philosopher of some importance who believed in a gradational ontology. Did not Descartes do the same when, reflecting on his own existence, he found himself situated between sovereign being and non-existence, thus participating of nothingness as well? He meant that his existence depended on God's. Something similar must have been in Plato's mind when he used such metaphors as "participation" or "imitation"†.

No doubt Guthrie finds here a better support for Plato's theory than with the Pythagoreans. He discretely leaves it to the reader to find out that in this passage he offers a piece of commentary on Plato's metaphysics which really hits the mark.

What Guthrie himself enjoys most in that heavily metaphysical work which is Plato's *Republic* is: the description of the origin of imperfect types of society and the origin of the individual. The first degeneration from the good state is timocracy. Plato describes the origin of the timocratic man. Next, he characterizes oligarchy, in which social esteem is measured by wealth: rich are set against poor, and the unity of the state is lost. As a reaction "democracy" arises, in the form Plato knew in Athens in his days, "for a short time the most attractive of all societies": its watchwords are liberty and free speech, everyone does as he likes—and it ends in a life without order or discipline. A reaction is inevitable, and the seeds of tyranny are sown. The description is, says Guthrie, "a masterpiece of realism, in which every age—certainly the present one—must recognize its own traits" (544).

Again, in his *Conclusion* (560f.) Guthrie says: in spite of some of its

† It is not my intention by these words to attribute to Plato anything like a theist conception, which would make of him the author of the later—perhaps not so much later, or may be even contemporary—theory of "the Ideas in the mind of God" (known to us mostly from Philo, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and, the most famous of all, Augustine).

positive provisions, which rightly move us to horror (!), Plato's *Republic* contains political lessons appropriate to any age.

Such and many more good and even delightful remarks may be found on quite a number of questions of detail, stylistic-literary as well as philosophical. There are also a few more or less important issues in which I cannot share the author's interpretation. It is here not the place to discuss all of them or even those I should particularly like to take up. Just one remark may be of use to clarify two problems which might be interesting to many readers: the meaning of "the Good" in *Rep.* VI and that of the Demiurge in the *Timaeus*. In both of these issues Guthrie's interpretation betrays rather clearly the fact that this author does not actually think in terms of "degrees of Reality", as Plato did. That is why Guthrie can explain the Good as the condition of knowledge in this sense, that it "makes the world intelligible and the human mind intelligent". "Which world?" could we ask. And that would be quite a Platonical question. However, it is clear that Guthrie does not think that way. When speaking of knowledge, it is for him a matter of course that the object of knowledge is the world, just the world in which we live. *This* our world, so he thinks, is made intelligible by "the Good". Indirectly, yes, this is what Plato thought. But in *Rep.* 509b6-8, when saying that for the objects of knowledge the Good is not only cause of their being-known, but also of their existence, which is "being" in the full and primary sense, in all this he is certainly not concerned with this our world. For him the order of intelligible being was of a different level, transcendent to that of visible things which depend on it. The Good, then, appears to be the *ultimate* Cause, as such transcending even the order of intelligible Being, and not to be confused with it, just as in the order of visible things the things that are seen can never be confused with the sun which in that order is cause both of the visibility of the objects and of their *genesis* and growth (*Rep.* 509a1-5, b2-4).

In the *Timaeus* where Plato offers a detailed cosmology, "the first cause is not called the Good, but God, the divine Mind" (G. 512). Here we have another instance of confusion of ontological levels. It is a theist way of understanding to take the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* for the ultimate cause of all "being", and therefore of the same ontological level as the Good in *Rep.* VI-VII. Plato used the word "God" on different levels. It is quite true that he did not use the personal term when speaking of the Good. That does not take away the fact that "the Good" is for him the ultimate cause, transcending even the level of intelligible Being. On the other hand, that the Demiurge is called "god" does not mean that Plato in thinking of the Maker of the cosmic universe, including Souls, was concerned with the same ontological level as in speaking of

the Good as the cause of intelligible Being. In fact, the levels are different.

These are essential things. Nevertheless, we must conclude by saying that by this volume Guthrie has achieved a work which is of a real interest to any serious reader, to the beginner who needs solid information and an introduction into the philosophical problems involved in the dialogues, as well as to the scholar who has passed a lifetime with reading Plato and is fairly well up in present-day discussions in this field. No doubt the scholar will enjoy a work like this most intensely and find it illuminating in many respects, and stimulating even where a different interpretation might be better.

2. W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. V, *The later Plato and the Academy*, Cambridge 1978.*

Guthrie's Fifth Vol. opens with the *Cratylus*. It is immediately followed by the *Parmenides*, a dialogue which, in whatever sense one will take the term, marks a crisis in Plato's work and thought.

The *Crat.* is concerned with the problem of the relation between language and reality: are the names by which we call things just "words", or do they have some affinity with their object? The problem is a highly actual one. In Plato's dialogue Cratylus defends the natural affinity thesis. Now Cratylus was an extreme Heraclitean who held that nothing in the world had any stability. If that is so, Socrates replies, there would not be an object for our knowledge. From the doctrine of perpetual flux we have to conclude, there must exist intelligible "Forms" that remain identical with themselves. Thus the *Cratylus* introduces once more the problem of the theory of knowledge, which will be treated in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophistes*.

It is interesting to compare J. N. Findlay's judgment. Findlay, whose work on Plato appeared almost at the same time as Guthrie's Vol. IV, marks the main issue of the *Cratylus* as follows: "It rejects the basic premiss of the Wittgensteinian theory of language: that there is no understanding or percipient grasp of ideal natures prior to the use of linguistic expression." Plato's conviction was, that insight into natures or meanings and their relations pre-exists and conditions the actual use of names and linguistic expressions[1].

Quite Platonically no doubt Findlay lays here a heavy emphasis on the ontological priority of "ideal characters or natures". Guthrie does not go that far. He rather goes with Aristotle in remarking: To say that names deal with essences is at least partly true, namely to this extent, that only by using words can we exercise the uniquely human capacity to generalize (23).

Parmenides, Theaetetus, Sophistes and Politicus are grouped in one chapter. G. introduces them as follows. With these dialogues Plato's thought takes a remarkable turn. The figure of Socrates no longer has the lead, as he had in the earlier dialogues. In the *Parm.* we meet an entirely different Socrates, a very young man, unsure of himself and putting forward the well-known hypothesis of "separate forms" and particulars that "share" in them, only to have it attacked by the old and famous Parmenides, who after leaving him helpless, kindly offers to give him the lesson in method which he so obviously needs. "What we have come to regard as the corner-stone of Platonism, bound up with visions of an immortal soul and a place beyond the heavens, is itself made the subject of a searching examination."

No doubt, this is a correct description.

The *Parmenides* then is treated first. G. begins by stating that it is surely *one of the oddest turns in the history of human thought*, that the dry antithetical arguments of the *Parm.* about the One should have been seen as an exposition of the sublimest truths of theology. He mentions Wahl (1926) and Max Wundt (1935), whose works were critically evaluated by me in *Een Keerpunt in Plato's Denken* (1936). Wundt's conclusion (1935) that "the Neoplatonists were not so far from Plato's doctrine as is often believed today", was certainly not an exaggerated statement, though one had to make one's reservations with regard to his interpretation of the eight deductions (often called "hypotheses") of the *Parm.* as describing each of them one particular part of Reality. It was Cornford, *Plato and Parmenides*, 1939, who showed the deficiency of the Neoplatonist interpretation, in particular with reference to the second deduction: this cannot possibly be taken as a description of the intelligible world. I took the matter up in the succinct monograph on Plato—*Plato, de filosoof van het transcendente*, Baarn 1968—, written shortly after the Heidelberg Platon-Rundgespräch (1967), and in that small volume corrected my earlier interpretation of the eight deductions of the *Parmenides*. When Guthrie just qualifies the Neoplatonist interpretation of the *Parm.* as "odd", he shows himself to be not altogether free from the spirit and language of his post-Wittgenstein surroundings. Later on he will bravely vindicate his own insight in Plato's thought, and, taking up the discussion with G. E. L. Owen on those passages in Plato's later dialogues in which the philosopher still expresses himself in the terms of the

* Not published before.

[1] J. N. Findlay, *Plato. The Written and Unwritten Doctrines*, London 1974, 218.

"classical" Theory of Forms, he will maintain that Plato never abandoned that theory. In this he stands against several modern interpreters, who think it so "absurd", that they do their utmost for saving Plato from the suspicion that he ever held that theory, even after the *Parmenides.* In this violent clash of opinions Guthrie simply keeps to Plato's text, and has it say what it says,—in spite of his own preference for a more Aristotelian conception of the problems of knowledge and of "being".

There are more controversial issues in which G. alleges a decisive argument. In the last decades I. Düring would make us believe that the "young Aristotle", who plays a modest rôle in the *Parm.* (137cd), was no other than the great Aristotle, who just at that time had entered the Academy as a young student. G. simply points to the entrance-scene, 127d1-3, where Aristotle is introduced as "the man who was afterwards one of the Thirty".

The arguments brought forward against the Theory of Forms in the first part of the *Parm.* are, after all, not so serious as they might seem to be. G. recognizes it. One of the arguments is that of the so-called "third man" (*Parm.* 132ab), an argument which presupposes that the resemblance of concrete things to the intelligible Form should be necessarily reciprocal. G. replies: "For Plato an intelligible could never be on a par with a sensible." Here G. recognizes the difference of ontological levels.

In the dialogue *Parm.* the young Socrates ventures the contra-thesis that each of the Forms is "a thought" (νόημα). The venerable Parmenides declines it. To which G. declares, quite categorically: "By this argument Parmenides answers, in advance, the long line of interpreters who have supposed the Platonic Forms to be thoughts in the mind of God. Even God can only think of the Forms because they are there. This is unambiguously stated in the *Timaeus.*"—It might seem so, if one takes the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* to be "God" in a theist sense, and moreover, takes his "looking to" the eternal model quite literally. However, this is ignoring the deliberately mythologizing character of the *Timaeus.*

This is one of the chief points in which I am at variance with Guthrie in his Plato-interpretation. I do not think it justified to understand the Demiurge of the *Tim.* as "God" in the Christian sense. Why not? Well, because the Demiurge of that dialogue is situated at the level of intelligible Being, and intelligible Being has its cause and ultimate Principle beyond it. That is, I think, a decisive reason why we cannot take the Demiurge to mean "God" in the Christian and biblical sense.

And what about his "looking to" the eternal Model? This is how Plato expresses himself. For us the matter is not to be duped by a way of expression, which deliberately took the form of a likeness. What could it mean that "even God can only think of the Forms because they are there"? If it is to make sense, we should rather say: "*The Forms are eternally there because God thinks them*". This is what Augustine meant when he understood the Platonic Ideas as the "Word of God", and next acknowledged that "*by faith*" we know that the Son is equal to the Father. I think by this we are no longer speaking of Plato's demiurge. We left him behind us with the *Timaeus.*

In the second part of the dialogue *Parm.* a training piece is offered. Some of the arguments are fallacious and sophistic. No doubt, readers are intended to detect the fallacies, and find out which positive result is implied in the arguments. G. expresses it as follows. To exalt the intelligible as alone fully real, was an achievement for which, Plato believed, philosophy must be for ever grateful; but at the same time it would have brought philosophy to a halt. Hence his efforts to provide a bridge between being and not-being, knowledge and ignorance. This is what happens here, and it will be continued in the *Soph.* The exhibition of the *Parm.* "proves" that Forms can admit contrary predicates, or also combine with each other. In the *Soph.* do we proceed to build on the ground thus cleared and learn, for instance, that some Forms can combine and others not.

G. might have noticed that the formal refutation of Parmenides' thesis—the *being* of *non-being*—follows from the thesis of the third antinomy (= the 5th deduction). In 162a we read: "So it appears that the non-being One exists." A memorable moment indeed. Was it not worth mentioning? I thought it is, and after expounding it extensively in *Keerpunt*, I brought it out in *Greek Philosophy* I, no. 333, in particular under *c*.

For the rest, I agree with G.'s interpretation. He is right, I think, in rejecting here the thesis of those who think, the *Parm.* inaugurated a modification of the theory of Ideas in this sense that Plato abandoned the idea of the Forms as transcendent paradigms in favour of regarding them as no more than universals. For this view he refers in particular to J. Ackrill, 'Symploke Eidon' (1955), in *Studies in Plato's Metaphysics*, ed. R. E. Allen, London 1965, p. 199-206. G. replies that many passages of the later dialogues stand against this view. The *Philebus* has several decisive passages, as have the *Soph.* and the *Statesman*, and of course the *Tim.* If *Laws* 965b-c is interpreted by some recent scholars as not referring to the 'Ideas', there is 859e, where the language is more like that of the *Phaedo.* It is also explicit in the Seventh Letter. Finally G. states that Aristotle never suggests that Plato altered his doctrine in this way; which is not the case.

G. concludes his chapter on the *Parm.* by saying: *Some* changes might be needed, but the corner-stone of the whole, the transcendent, eternal, ideal character of the Forms remained in place.

There can hardly be any doubt concerning the date of the *Theaetetus*: since at the outset of this dialogue the author shrinks from contesting the doctrine of the most venerable Parmenides, a doctrine which is refuted in the dialogue that bears his name, it is impossible that the *Theaet.* would have been written after that dialogue. None the less, G. follows Cornford in placing the *Theaet.* after the *Parm.* Of course, it is followed by the *Soph.*, and as it seems immediately. However, this is the kind of appearences that are not at all conclusive for matters of dating.

G. is right in stating that the *Theaet.*, since the rôle of sense-perception is a first stage in the process of knowledge, does not differ essentially from either the *Phaedo* or the *Republic*: *Being* and Truth are not reached by the senses, but through the reflection of the mind on the *data* they report to it (186e). None the less, the analysis in itself is interesting, as much as its result.

The ὀρθὴ δόξα discussed in the later part of the dialogue does not refer to Forms. It is empirical knowledge which within certain limits can serve us well. But this does not infringe the rule that knowledge in its proper sense is concerned with νοητά.

In the *Sophist* the method of diaeresis is demonstrated by the example of the angler. It is followed by seven divisions defining the sophist. Modern critics have been severe in their judgment: "the angler" would be a satire, not philosophy. And at least six of the seven divisions offered to define the sophist, have a satirical, non-scientific character. G. is not the first to make this assessment. But it is interesting that he makes it. No doubt it is too severe. It is curious that G. who for the rest is highly sensitive to the strong element of play in Plato's dialogues, does not stand this systematical display of wit, jest and lightheartedness. The old and almost classical German Plato-translator and commentator O. Apelt did not think that in this playful demonstration the method itself was ridiculed. No doubt Plato took it very serious. He used it throughout his life, and it served in the Academy, not only as a method of biological classification, but of dialectic as it was understood and practised there.

The seventh definition of the *Sophist* led to the problem of "how is it possible to say things that are not true". This would suppose "the being of non-being". The guest from Elea says, reluctantly but forced by the necessity of the argument: "Then, we have now to attack the main thesis of our father" (the πατρικὸς λόγος) ....

Indeed, that cannot be avoided.

The εἰδῶν φίλοι are ironically depicted in terms reminding of the

Phaedo and other "classical" dialogues. Guthrie comments: No doubt Plato is preparing the reader for a modification of his own metaphysics. In which sense?

"*Motion has a place in the real world*", G. replies, summarizing 248e-250e. What Plato says is that motion, life, soul and understanding can hardly be denied to "the fully being". It is ours to ask here: What does he mean? G. is somewhat hesitating in his answer. "Does Plato mean to enlarge the realm of Being, in order to include life, soul and intelligence, which are not Forms?" That is the solution of both Cornford and Diès (in his Introd. to the *Soph.* in his edition), adopted by most scholars. We must say to it: Plato is not *extending* the realm of Being so as to include in it things that are not intelligible. The *motion* admitted is a non-phenomenal motion, which is entirely different from γένεσις. Moreover, in the intelligible order of which Plato is speaking Motion is not just a Form next to other separate Forms, but it penetrates the whole of the intelligible order and is essential to it. That is what we learn from the following pages of the *Soph.* which deal with the highest genera and with the fact that some Forms can combine with others, others not, and that there are some all-pervading Forms. It should be noticed that Plato spoke of the latter as of "the highest *kinds*", thus breaking through the idea of a multiplicity of *eide*, of which each has its own special character. Apparently the whole of the intelligible world is as it were an articulate body, the members of which are interrelated and connected, with some all-penetrating and connecting elements that pervade the whole.

That is how we can understand Plato's language in 248c-249a. To Cherniss, who affirmed that the *motion* admitted to the realm of perfect Being was *the Form* of motion, Guthrie objects: "However, Plato says that Being includes not only *the Forms* Rest and Motion, but also "whatever is unmoved and whatever is moved" (249d). Hence, some scholars think that it includes either *all* or at least *some* things in the physical world. "This would indeed be a recantation."—It would, and even more than that: it would be against Plato's first and lasting principles. G. sees that perfectly well. He concludes as follows:

"What Plato now admits to Being is not the revolving body of the cosmos or its contents, but the element of soul in it"—that is to say, the World-soul—"reaching down to subordinate living creatures, and a fortiori the supreme Mind, the Creator"—that is to say, the Demiurge, who is a *Noûs*.—"The Forms remain unmoved and impassive. Their causal function resembles rather that of Aristotle's Unmoved Mover: the mere existence of their perfection excites the development in physical things."

To this I note: This is indeed the spiritually moving force of the noetic

Order. But is not this the core, and as it seems the hidden secret, of Plato's metaphysics? Plotinus understood it perfectly well when he formulated it in these words: Πᾶν τέλειον γεννᾷ. That is the clue to Platonism as an explanation of the universe.

Guthrie is a modest man. He immediately mitigates his declaration. It remains "uncertain", so he says, and refers the reader back to his n. 2 on p. 144, where he cites my explanation given in *Philosophia*, Part I. He mentions it as "both attractive and well defended".

What is his reservation with regard to it? For clearly there is something why he does not venture to embark on it.

No doubt it is the fact that G. cannot really enter into the view of a divine Mind that works impersonally. He thinks (with Aristotle) that an efficient cause is needed to explain the genesis of a sensible world. And this is what he finds in the Demiurge of Plato's *Timaeus*. He is happy to find the same conception in the *Soph.*: there too, it is said (in 265c) that "the works of nature", as we use to call them, cannot be understood as the product of some automatic and mindless force, but only as the work of a craftsman-god, acting with reason, art and knowledge. (We note in margine: How could such a *purposive* divine thinking be impersonal? The curious thing is that, precisely in Aristotle, where Nature acts so *purposively*, none the less it is an impersonal order, in which motion is directed to an end)[2].

To *Soph.* 265c G. remarks: The idea of a God creating the world was not at all a traditional notion of Greek religion. On the contrary: it does not occur there. And G. concludes: "The combination of supreme god with creator may fairly be credited to Plato."

An amazing statement indeed. Among philosophers it should certainly rather be credited to Socrates (see a.o. his talk with the atheist Aristodemus, in Xen., *Mem.* I 4,4-9[3]. Plato's convictions about the ultimate cause of the sensible world were certainly more complicated, not to say sophisticated. It is a rather simplistic solution to declare the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* to be "the Supreme" and thus to identify him with the ἀγαθόν of *Rep.* VI-VII. As a matter of fact, this is christianizing Plato. Before Guthrie A. E. Taylor went that way. Burnet did not. He

[2] I think A. Mansion's explanation of Aristotle's *Physics* to be clinching in this repect. I summarized Mansion's exposé of Aristotle's conception of nature in contradistinction to Plato's under No. 485 in my *Gr.Phil.* II. For Arist. Form is a higher aspect of Nature. It is *not an intelligent principle*, not a thinking and deliberating being, but it is *intelligible.* The question of whether in Aristotle the "purposive" order of Nature was conceived to be personal or not, is exemplarily discussed in Mansion's chapter on "Finality" (*Introd. à la physique aristotélienne*, [2]1946, in partic. 252-263). The chief argument is found in my *Gr.Phil.* II, under no. 499.

[3] G. quotes this passage later, 255, n. 2.

defined the problem very precisely[4] and stated that it had its difficulties. Plato believed himself to have proved the existence of God by strictly scientific reasoning. He taught most emphatically that God is good and not the cause of anything evil. But he did not identify his God with the First Principle, the ἀγαθόν. The problem involved in this explains, Burnet thinks, why Plato never wrote or published the Lecture on the Good, and why in the *Laws*, which was contemporary with that Lecture and written for publication, he always speaks of God and never of the Good.

Were the μέγιστα γένη of the *Soph.* "Forms"? A. L. Peck denied it in a well-known article (1952). Later Richard Robinson spoke of it as "a dreadful question", he was not able to answer. G. replies, they certainly were more to Plato than mere concepts of the mind. He even remembers their exalted status (254a).

He might have said that for Plato logical questions were never merely concerned with "concepts of the mind". We have to remember the main issue of the *Cratylus* which induced Findlay to point to the basic difference between Wittgenstein's theory of language and Plato's way of thinking. G. does not mention the name of Wittgenstein, but he is clearly embarrassed by the ontological character of Plato's theory of Forms. He makes the following statements (160f.).

It is said that Plato was hampered by the resources of language available to him at that time. However, what really hampered him was his faith in the all-sufficiency of the doctrine of Forms. The undoubted logical advances of the *Sophist* were gained in spite of that faith, not through it.—The Forms, which he had first evolved in response to the Socratic faith in absolute values, do play a rôle in the *Soph.*, "but philosophy might have progressed more easily if they had not."

The *Politicus* continues the *Soph.* It refines the method of diaeresis, which here is applied to the concept of the statesman. The divisions must be made κατ' ἄρθρα, that is according to natural articulations. G. enlarges on the significance of the *paradeigma*: it is not so much an "example" as an "analogy". It serves to detect common elements in different compounds and thus it has some relevance to the supreme question of philosophy: coming to the discovery of Forms. For on this depends knowledge. Plato speaks of "the στοιχεῖα of all things" (278d). Are not the Forms referred to? G. thinks so, but to some modern opponents, who explain the passage differently, he grants that in itself it is not proving. However, there are three other passages in the *Polit.* In 285d-286a it is said that of the greatest and most precious things no im-

[4] In: *Greek Philosophy, Thales to Plato*, first published in 1914, repr. 1950, 335ff.

age can be made that can be grasped by the senses. The only way to indicate them is by means of λόγος.

Is not this a clear reference to Plato's middle-period theory of paradigm-Forms? G. thinks it is. However, G. E. L. Owen has denied it in a recent article ("Plato on the undepictable" in: *Studies Vlastos* 1973). G. takes the discussion up and meets Owen with solid arguments. Moreover, there is *Polit.* 269d which leaves no doubt, and lastly there is 300c.

The good statesman must combine opposite qualities. Plato illustrates this by the paradigm of weaving. The right measure appears to lie in a mean between extremes. H. J. Krämer in his work on *Arete in Plato und Aristoteles* (1959) laid great emphasis on the μετρητική—passage of *Polit.* 284e-285a. He marks this as a new element in Plato's ethical and metaphysical thought: in the earlier period the notions of κόσμος and τάξις prevailed (in the *Gorg.*, but also in the *Rep.*); from now on the good is defined as the μέτριον. Guthrie does not mention Krämer in this context. But he does raise the question of whether Plato's view of virtue as expressed in the *Polit.* differs essentially from his earlier views, expressed in the *Republic.* He remarks that in the *Rep.* too, the guardians had to combine opposite virtues, and that the means to this is "the one big thing", education, in *Rep.* and *Polit.* alike. In *Rep.* 423e5 μέτριος is the epithet for the properly educated. While replying to Skemp, Guthrie replies in fact to Krämer as well.

After having patiently dealt with the *Philebus*, G. concludes that, after all, this is a "weary" dialogue. Because here we have a lengthy debate on "pleasures" which, as a matter of fact, he did not recognize as such. The "necessary pleasures"—those of moderate eating and drinking, and of sex within marriage—are admitted, but one feels Plato would have been happier if the related "ends"—the preservation of the individual and of the race—could be achieved without pleasure. We ask: Would that have been so? I think, G.'s view of Plato as a character is too much modelled after the remembrance of the *Phaedo.* After that impressive image the Plato of the *Philebus* is hardly trustworthy for him.

He goes on (239): "The whole question at issue is really settled from the beginning. It is a statement of belief rather than of genuine argument." It is "a façade for dogma".

This after the patient analysis of ἡδονή given in this dialogue and the open inquiry into the question of what is the best life for man. It is said there that "the mixed life" is the best. Due proportion is the main thing. But after νοῦς and ἐπιστήμη, after practical knowledge and true opinions, "pleasure" gets it legitimate place,—to wit, pleasure of the mind, which sometimes is reached by means of the senses.

Though granting that the analysis of ἡδονή marks a great progress after *Gorg.*, *Protag.* and *Rep.* IX, granting even that the acknowledgement of "the mixed life" is quite new after the *Gorg.* etc., moreover, stating that in this dialogue Plato comes very close to Aristotle, Guthrie thinks, after all, that by these practical questions Plato fell a bit below his proper level. Plato retains his conviction that the philosophical life is the best, but he knows that very few can practise it at all, and those not all the time. He shared this conviction with Aristotle, who expressed it clearly in *EN* X, ch. 7. In Plato, however, the fact that so much attention was given to the problems of our incarnate state resulted in a tension, which led to an unevenness, and consequently to inconsistency. That is "disturbing to a reader".

This is G.'s final assessment. We cannot say that he is wrong in finding in this dialogue "a certain untidiness, and a lack of that precision which Plato himself singles out as the mark of real knowledge". None the less, we do think it belongs to Plato's grandeur to have engaged in a discussion such as is presented to us here. The positive upshot is important enough. I take the main points.

The *Phil.* is concerned with "life in the body", just as the *Politicus*; "the good" is the good-for-man, to be realized in human life. But this does not mean to cut off humanity from what is above it.—Till here all is well. But G. goes on: "the eternal Reason which controls the cosmos and of which man's own reasoning powers are a part."—Here, no doubt, G. gives an interpretation not accounted for in Plato's text, neither in the *Phil.* nor in the *Tim.* As for the *Tim.*, it is clear enough that the Demiurge—a transcendent *Noûs*—first creates the world-soul (35a ff.), next the higher soul of man (40d). He does so himself, and from the same mixture, for the soul is immortal, since it is his own work. It is only the vegetative soul which belongs to the body, which is made secondarily, together with the bodies of the other ζῷα, by the "visible Gods" (*Tim.* 41a6-d3), by order of the Demiurge. It is not so that the souls of man (their rational souls) derive from the world-soul or are parts of it.

Does such an idea follow from *Phil.* 29b-30c? It might seem so, by analogy. Our body is said to depend on the body of the cosmos (29e5). But that body of ours has a soul. Now whence could it have got that, if not from "the all", which has an ensouled body? (30a3-8).

But now, notice what follows. Socrates confirms that, indeed, the universe has a soul endowed with reason,—for *those four principles* we assumed, to wit: Limit, Unlimited, Mixture and Cause, *gave to our bodies a soul that trains and checks and cures our body, and is called wisdom.* Wouldn't the same principles furnish a soul to that great universe, which is so much more than our small body? (30a-b).

This is what Plato says. On closer inspection the passage does not imply a different doctrine from that which is clearly expressed in the *Timaeus*. In the *Phil.* too it is the Cause, which by combining *peras* and *apeiron*, provides itself a rational soul, both to man and to the universe. And surely the soul of man is not said to be "a part" of the soul of "the All".

None the less, G. gives a good picture of the character of Plato's philosophy when describing it as follows (203): "Plato's conviction that the world is rationally ordered by a divine Intelligence which aims at the best, runs right through his thought, from *Phaedo* and *Rep.* to the *Laws*. It is the main theme of the *Timaeus* and from the beginning present in the *Philebus*. Here too the ethical and metaphysical are combined. Measure, proportion and symmetry make any mixture good by due proportion of the ingredients, in individual man and in the cosmos. The whole of reality is present in Plato's thought: man is to him an integral part of the cosmic order."

In this description it is not particularly brought out that "the Cause" of all cosmic order is a *transcendent Noûs*. G. knows it, and he does mention it again in the final pages of this chapter (237/8): *Noûs* is αἴτιον, it is "of course an extra-cosmic God", yet it is also within the mixture, for the cosmos is a living and intelligent being.—True, though it might have been better not to say that the Cause "is" in the mixture. This is saying something too much, as Plato brought clearly out in his conception of the Demiurge who "made" or *created* the World-soul.

What is the place of the Forms in this dialogue? G. (237) rightly says, they are presupposed: they are the unchangeable object of knowledge (57e-58a, 59a-c, 61e), but "they can now be taken for granted". For the *Phil.* is concerned with life in the body, the eternal realities are not the subject of the dialogue.

In *Phil.* 26d Plato speaks about the mixture of *peras* and *apeiron* as γένεσις εἰς οὐσίαν, and in 27b we find the expression γεγενημένη οὐσία. In the beginning of this century Natorp welcomed these formulas with great enthusiasm, and thought a definitely new insight had been attained here. In our days many of the νεώτεροι have taken over his inheritance. Yet, it is not possible to hold the thesis of a radical change in Plato's thought without doing violence to a number of clear and unambiguous texts. The modern philosopher's wish of finding in Plato the reality of this our visible world fully acknowledged cannot be fulfilled without going against Plato's own repeated testimony. It must be said here that it is only fair and honest to leave to a philosopher, even of the past, the intellectual convictions he actually had. In this Guthrie (232) sides with Plato. At *Phil.* 26b he notes, citing Hackforth, "that we should not read too much in such expressions". Cf. *Tim.* 35a: οὐσίας ... γιγνομένης, and 31b3: γεγονὼς ἔστιν καὶ ἔτ' ἔσται. R. G. Bury wrote in his edition of the *Phil.* (1897, repr. 1973) that "this apparent weakening of the barrier between Being and Becoming" occurs especially in the later dialogues, where it seems to be a question less of contrasting Being with Becoming than of distinguishing grades of Being.—That is, indeed, how Plato thought about Reality. And that is precisely what modern philosophy cannot accept.

A long chapter is dedicated to *Critias* and *Timaeus*. Plato had a modest idea of what a philosophy of Nature could be. He expounds it in 29c-d: of a changing world which is an εἰκών of an unchanging model, only an εἰκὼς λόγος is possible. However, of this logos, in which the mathematics, physics and medical theories of his days play such an important part, he underlines the high degree of probability (48d, 72d). Plato would not be Plato if in his description of the human body there were not a good part of humour. Certain details, no doubt, must be taken cum grano salis. On the whole of Plato's view of natural science G. remarks: "Plato's present view of science as advancing indefinitely through investigation of phenomena without ever reaching unquestionable truth, has more in common with the 20th century than the Aristotelian conception of its progress" (252). He (Pl.) intends his account of the natural world to be as accurate as possible, within the limits imposed by the subject-matter and by man's powers of understanding.

Has the Demiurge to be taken "literally" and the creation of the world as an event in time? G. is convinced of "Plato's theism". Demythologizing (255) the Demiurge would mean infringing the fundamentally rational structure of the universe, so he thinks. Not everybody will share this opinion, not even all Greek philosophers. Plotinus who definitely wished to follow Plato, was convinced that the divine *Noûs*-Providence was beyond deliberation, which is proper to a lower kind of intellect. Divine Providence simply means that things are κατὰ νοῦν. Likewise many Indian philosophers think that "God" should not be thought of as "personal". The Divine Mind must be impersonal by being infinite. Personality means limitation and particularization. In Findlay's terminology this is called "instantiation". If "God" were personal, he would be an "instantial God." And that is why Findlay rejects theism.

This is Hegel's voice, might one say. It is. But are we therefore far from Plato? I must say, I am personally more inclined to consider the Demiurge as a consciously made personification of the dynamic aspect of the intelligible Reality, which is the Divine (θεῖον). As such it is creative.

Therefore, it makes no sense to say that for the creation of a sensible world an efficient cause is needed. True, Plato speaks in that way. None the less, he without any doubt conceived his νοητά as Divine Being. In "Perfect Being" is for him implied: living and thinking, which is the motion of the Mind[5]. Also selfconsciousness, which for moderns is a "perfectio entis" and criterium of personality? It seems not. Nothing in Plato leads us that way. Plotinus knew the notion of selfconsciousness, but he considered it not to be of first importance. On the contrary, the higher life of the Spirit works better and purer without it[6]. Thus, Plato without especially reflecting on it, probably conceived the Divine Mind as an impersonal thinking-process, mighty and dynamical. For us this might be hard to follow. That may be then, consciously or unconsciously, a Christian feature of our mind.

On such difficult questions as: What is the relation between the Demiurge or divine *Noûs* and the eternal pattern he is working after? or: What to think of the so-called "pre-existent Matter", which without any "form" or determination seems somehow to exist and to move irregularly, waiting for the Demiurge to give it its form and real existence, and bring it to regularity and order? or also: What is the character of the third principle that conditions the genesis of material things? Is it just the receptacle, offering space for things becoming, or is it also "formless material" which can be informed?—on all these difficult questions G. argues with precision and sound judgement. As for the last mentioned problem, he defends that the χώρα is not only space (what is later called the ἐν ᾧ), but also "stuff without property" (the ἐξ οὗ), an abstraction, not anything concrete, a conception similar to the ὕλη of Aristotle[7].

In this G. follows Plato's text precisely. Somewhat more speculative is his idea that after the *Parmenides* Plato abandoned the metaphor of μέθεξις and preferred to speak of "likeness" and "imitation". I think our evidence is not sufficient to support this conclusion. After all, why should Plato no longer have used the term *methexis*? The arguments of the *Parm.* were not that serious, and if one uses the metaphor of imitation, that of participation will do as well. Moreover, Aristotle attacks Plato exactly for having used that metaphor of participation. And lastly, in the account of Plato's doctrine given by the Sicilian Alkimos, ap. Diog. Laert. III 13, we find as ἀρχαί, reached by the study of different groups of Forms, these two: the reality of μέθεξις and the transcendency of the Forms. This is, after all, not without interest[8].

[5] *Soph.* 248e-249a.

[6] *Enn.* I 4, 10.

[7] *Infra*, ch. VI, 166 with n. 160

[8] K. Gaiser treated Alcimus' account of Plato's doctrine in a remarkable contribution to the vol. *Zetesis* (Festschr. E. de Stryker, Antwerp 1973, 61-79); interesting, but certainly not definitive. I think Gaiser is right in tracing the Alcimus account back to some doxographical source, unknown to us but probably circulating within the Academy. However, it must be noted that in this account both the notion of participation (τὸ μετέχειν) and that of the transcendency of the Ideas are strongly emphasized, and this in terms which recall Aristotle, *Met.* A 6, 987b, 7-10. Moreover, it must be remembered that Alcimus positively takes up the νόημα formula, suggested but rejected in *Parm.* 132bc, combining it (rightly) with the ἀΐδιον. I hope to have soon the opportunity to discuss these matters with Dr. Gaiser.

In the part of the *Tim.* concerned with anthropology Plato speaks of the confusion of the soul at birth, that "horrific effect" produced by the confinement of an immortal soul within the flux of a mortal body. G. notes: "Plato's view of children ("harder to handle than any wild animal", *Nom.* 808d) is the reverse of the sentimental or Wordsworthian."

G. has an excellent chapter on the *Laws*. It gives a good idea of the general character and underlying principles, and an interesting survey of a number of important details. For Plato law is a form of education (857e). Therefore laws must be preceded by introductions (*proems*), to explain to people why the lawgiver enacts what he enacts. He must not impose his laws to the citizens without any explanation. Persuasion and exhortation are needed to win the understanding and cooperation of the citizens. The consent of the governed is of primary importance. The aim of punishment is therapeutic. The first thing to be done in case of transgressions is to talk with the offender (862d-63e). There is a scale of penalties, ranging from a "reprimand" or loss of reputation through fines, loss of civil rights and exile, to death. In the case of incurables the treatment has to be drastic.

Law is the only safeguard against abuse of power, whether of an individual dictator, an oligarchic group or of the people. By this Plato formulated a principle valid for any time and form of community. The same may be said of the principle that the best laws rely not on force but on willing consent. The spirit of Plato's *Laws* was that of the philosophical life: it aims at virtue, and at the happiness that always goes together with it; it "cares for the soul" and considers measure, proportion and limit as essential to goodness.

Among the *Dubia* G. gives some credit to the *Clitophon*, a small aporetic dialogue, which gives a devastating criticism of the Socratic method. He is inclined to accept *The rivals* as authentic too. It is astonishing that he is even willing to admit the authenticity of the *Theages*. This is one of the really rare cases in which G.'s mostly excellent judgement fails completely. He seems to be somewhat too much im-

pressed by Friedländer who, first, made the mistake of accepting the *Alcib. Mai.* as authentic, and next even the *Theages*. This is an undefendable position. However, the decisive point seems to have been overlooked by both parties. Here are the facts.

Against Souilhé[9] G. alleges *Theaet.* 151a where Socr. soberly says that sometimes his daimonion warned him not to enter in intercourse with certain people who seek his company, while it permits him to do so with others. We may take it for sure that the historical Socrates sometimes got such warnings by that inner voice he heard. Yet, those few above-cited words do not even justify the opening scene of the *Alcibiades*, let alone the pages of the *Theages* (128d-131a) in which Socrates enlarges on the miraculous interferences of that divine Voice, which through his intermediary warns other persons not to go to this-or-that place—where, if they neglect the warning, a miserable death befalls them. Here the daimonion is described as a δύναμις (129e) that works constantly in Socrates' συνουσίαι. If they are to be successful, the cooperation of the daimonion is needed.

To this exposition Theages replies that, in case of necessity, he is willing and prepared to παραμυθεῖσθαι that Divinity "by prayers and sacrifices" (εὐχαῖσί τε καὶ θυσίαις). And Socrates accepts this generous offering.—

Well, this is exactly the third form of *asebeia* (according to *Nom.* X 885b), which was most sharply condemned by Plato in *Rep.* II 364b5-365b1, and again in *Nom.* X 906d-907b. Such a passage would make a crude parody of Plato's Socrates.

For a right understanding of the philosophical passage of the *Seventh Letter* G. refers to Rich. Robinson who writes[10]: "Intuition is not for him (Pl.) an easy way of shortcircuiting method, but the reward reserved precisely for the master of method." Intuition—the "seeing" of the Form—is at the end of the laborious process of knowledge. Similarly K. von Fritz in *Essays*, 412f.

The unwritten doctrines

Having gone through Plato's complete oeuvre, G. sits down to write an unavoidable chapter on the "Unwritten Metaphysics". He does it without enthusiasm, but as a scientific duty.

Without enthusiasm, for he is convinced that those who by reading the dialogues have got a vivid impression of Plato as a philosopher, author

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[9] *Dialogues suspectes* (Coll. Budé, Platon t. XIII, 2), 1930, pp. 130-137, "La voix démonique", esp. 132.

[10] In: *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, Oxford ^{2}1953, 65.

and personality, have nothing essential to learn from the indirect evidence. Studying that material can only sow confusion and blur the impression made by Plato's own writings, so he thinks. In this G. stands in an interesting contrast to J. N. Findlay who, at least as categorically, holds that by neglecting the indirect evidence one is actually bound to degrade Plato to a second rank in philosophy and will never be able to understand his real greatness in the world of philosophic insight, in which in fact he ranks with the first.

As I remembered in my First Chapter, the issue was alive to John Burnet and to A. E. Taylor in the years between 1920 and '30. It was taken up by the Tübingen School some 25 years later. G. therefore thinks it his duty as a historian not to ignore the topic.

It does not escape his attention that there is a remarkable amount of instability in the chief publications of the Tübingen school. While both Gaiser (1955) and H. J. Krämer (1959) started with a rather radical disparagement of the dialogues as testimonies to Plato's philosophy, Gaiser as early as 1968 opened the perspective that "the fossilized schemes" which Hermodorus and Sextus offer us, might be filled up with the living thought of Plato's dialogues. He even granted that such a filling up of "the skeleton" would be the only way to bring the latter back to life[11]. That was surprising indeed, and hopeful.

A few years earlier Krämer had made his "retractations"[12], assuring us that he had never meant to say that the doctrine of First Principles would have been present to Plato's mind from the earliest beginnings of his written works.

Moreover, such notions as "esoteric doctrine" and even "secret doctrine", which were frequently used by Krämer in his work of '59, were formally interdicted at the Heidelberg Symposium of 1967[13]. J. Wippern wrote in the introduction to the volume *Das Problem der ungeschriebenen Lehre Platons*, Darmstadt 1972, that we are only at the beginning: a new insight into many aspects of Plato's philosophy has been made possible, but the greater part of the work has still to be done[14]. G. starts from Wippern's modest statement that "only the first tentative steps have been taken" and offers a few general points on which caution seems advisable. They are the following.

1. Was Plato with his doctrine of two Ultimate Principles first and essentially the continuator of Presocratic *archè*-philosophy? That is the Tübingen view. G. thinks it is too much influenced by Aristotle. In fact,

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[11] Above, p. 16ff.

[12] "Retraktationen", in *Museum Helveticum* (1964), 166m n. 100.

[13] *Idee und Zahl*, Heidelberg 1968, 150.

[14] "Fast alles ist noch zu leisten." (XLIII).

Aristotle himself inherited far more of the old Ionian spirit than did Plato.

2. The influence of Socrates is practically ignored.

3. Since the dialogues are taken as merely "protreptic", the positive ontological meaning of their contents is not understood or at least seriously underrated.

4. The dialogues are qualified as "only a game" ("nur ein Spiel", Krämer, *Platonbild*, ed. Gaiser 1969).

5. No inner development of Plato can be detected in the dialogues. The arguments for this thesis are quite insufficient.

6. Krämer argues strongly for a "common Academic system" upheld by Plato and his followers alike. Yet, the Academic tradition was not a unity. We know that both Speusippus and Xenocrates departed in important ways from Plato's philosophy and differed the one from the other. There were other varieties.

By these six points G. touches in fact on the chief issues on which the Tübingen doctrine is open to criticism. His further treatment of the unwritten doctrine offers a whole number of precious remarks. Only on the last page (441/2) he is definitely wrong in his answer to the question of "whether Plato's metaphysics were monistic or dualistic". He replies as follows.

It looks as if for him (Pl.) the One and the *Apeiron* were both ultimate. Yet, that is not the case. "The *Timaeus* does not stop there" but teaches that *the supreme God, the Demiurge, acts on these two archai.* He enjoys prior status and is himself the unique and primary cause. "The monism of Plato's metaphysics lies in his theism."

Here G. made the theological synthesis which Plato refrained from making himself. Now a synthesis is in itself not a bad thing. However, if one makes it, one should not do so going against some fundamental principles laid down by the philosopher himself. Does G.'s synthesis stand this criterium? I am afraid not. It involves him in a number of insoluble problems.

1. For Plato the Good, later identified with the One, is the cause of noetic Being. The Demiurge is not. On the contrary, as a transcendent noûs he is himself of the level of transcendent-noetic Being.

2. Does the Demiurge "work on what seemed to be the First Principles"? G. can say so, while thinking of the αἴτιον, the fourth principle in the *Philebus*, which is the cause of the mixture of *Peras* and *Apeiron.* However, precisely because the here mentioned "cause" *works on Peras* and *Apeiron* as second and third principles, it is obvious that here the *Peras* is not the First and Ultimate Principle of all, but a *Peras derived* from the First. Similarly in the *Timaeus*, where the Demiurge mixes the element of Identity (ταὐτόν) with that of Difference (θάτερον), these are no doubt *noetic* principles, but certainly not the First or Ultimate.

3. The "Forms" are, G. says (434), *archai*, but *archai* which have again their own *archè.* I think so. The Forms are *noeta*, and as such they are *theia.* In G.'s view they have for the Demiurge a regulative function. But they are neither the ultimate Principles nor are they independent of them. They *derive* from the ultimate Principles. In G.'s view of the Demiurge as the supreme God, however, it is impossible to find a place for them.

I think these fatal consequences are prohibitive of the theist interpretation as *archai.*

In a "Postscript to Plato" Guthrie hastens to say that the last chapter (on the Unwritten Doctrines) is "inappropriate as a final farewell to Plato". Again, the essential of Plato's philosophy is not in the testimonies of other writers, but in his own works, the dialogues. The essential of Plato's thinking would not be in a "systematical" exposé, say (1) his views on politics, ethics and education; (2) his metaphysics and epistemology; (3) his psychology and anthropology; (4) his cosmology and theory of nature, etc. For him, knowledge is bound up with metaphysics, and theory of knowledge not to be separated from both metaphysics and a doctrine of the soul. "Virtue" is knowledge and regards both private and political life. It is not to be separated from "Reality". And the logical problems of classification and definition are not to be separated from metaphysics either. That is why G. thought it better to leave the work of systematizing to the readers and just bring them into touch with the works of Plato as we have them.

This is G.'s reply to the remarks of some readers of his vol. IV. Speaking for myself, after having followed him on his long way through Plato's dialogues, I wish to say a word of admiration and gratitude. G.'s work gives a good impression of what philosophy meant to Plato. In patiently taking up the discussion with those who hold that since the *Parm.* Plato abandoned the theory of transcendent Forms; in checking different interpretations of a number of passages in the later dialogues bearing on this and on other problems; in cautiously formulating a number of objections against the Tübingen theory; in tentatively presenting a final view of "what Plato meant", G. is actually rethinking the dialogues in cooperation with a whole number of modern interpreters and opponents, thus carefully, patiently and judiciously making us share Plato's way of discussing philosophical problems. This is a real service to philosophy, worthy of the man to whom these last two volumes were devoted. And this is, I think, not a small praise.

The Academy

G.'s 5th volume includes some fifty pages in which he deals with the Early Academy in so far as the members were Plato's contemporaries. After a general characterisation of the school as "a society of mathematicians and philosophers like that depicted in *Rep.* 7", a society in which there was a great variety of theories, he subsequently deals with Eudoxus, Speusippus, Xenocrates and Heraclides Ponticus. He gives a good orientation. The fragments of Speusippus and Xenocrates leave us with a few major problems of interpretation. H. J. Krämer discussed them extensively in *Der Ursprung der Geistphilosophie*, 1964, [2]1967. His reinterpretation of Speusippus' so-called evolutionary theory convinced at least some German critics[15] more than his somewhat Hegelianizing version of Xenocrates, who in his view of later developments appears as the "Urheber der Geistphilosophie". Guthrie, as might be expected, is considerably more reserved. Concerning Speusippus' metaphysics he says (462): "so far as can be judged, Speus. did not have in mind any temporal evolution, but only, like Aristotle, logical or causal priority and posteriority".

In Xenocrates he finds strong Pythagorean features, not only in his identification of the Ideas with mathematical numbers, but also in his conception of the Dyas as the female Deity (cf. Philolaus, fr. 20a D.K.), who governs the world "under the heavens" (fr. 15), functioning as the Soul of the universe. G. remarks: "The indefinite Dyas is here no longer hylè".

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[15] E.g. K. Oehler in *Gnomon* 1968.

CHAPTER FOUR

PLATO'S PLACE IN METAPHYSICS

Italian reactions to Krämer's Plato 1982-83

In Krämer we found a highly dogmatical Plato, achiever of the *archè*-philosophy of the Presocratics, who taught the doctrine of two ultimate principles from which all things derive. We cannot say that this image of Plato was easily accepted among scholars. However, after a certain space of time Krämer's theories do penetrate the minds of a number of Platonists, though certainly more the minds of those who are concerned with later Platonism, either of the centuries preceding Neoplatonism or of Neoplatonism, including that of the period after Jamblichus and Proclus; not so much of those who are concerned with Plato's own written works. A few years after 1980 Krämer was given the opportunity to expound his theory in full for an Italian public: Professor G. Reale translated and introduced a new voluminous work of Krämer's[1], which starts with an elaborate account of the history of the problem in 19th-century Germany. In the circle of Italian scholars this part of the work in particular could be welcomed as a new contribution to the topic.

"All things begin with Schleiermacher", so it might seem in the field of Plato-studies. A highly interesting character, no doubt, that parson's son from Breslau, who in the later years of the 18th century was educated in the school and seminary of the Herrnhutters, in rather a small place; later professor of theology and philosophy in the University of Halle, afterwards in Berlin, which then was a freshly created centre of academic study. In this new seat of learning Schleiermacher wrote his important theological works. In earlier years he had written an Ethic, very different from Kant and akin to Shaftesbury. He was a great Plato-reader, and considered the Dialogues to be the only adequate form in which Plato's philosophy could be expressed; a view which still in our days is shared by distinguished Platonists, such as H. Gundert, E. de Strycker and W. K. C. Guthrie. There were others at that time, both philosophers and philologists, who were more open to the testimony of Aristotle and a few others, and took their reports about Plato's doctrine quite seriously. Boeckh, Brandis and Trendelenburg have to be mentioned. Among

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[1] H. Krämer, *Platone e i fondamenti della metafisica. Saggio sulla teoria dei principi e sulle dottrine non scritte di Platone, con una raccolta dei documenti fondamentali in edizione bilingue e bibliografia.* Introd. e. trad. a cura di G. Reale Milano 1982.

romantics Schelling is usually considered a (Neo)Platonist, and Hegel was likewise. Krämer treats them as such and explains: All of them followed, with Spinoza, the Platonic doctrine of two ultimate principles, which had been integrated in Neoplatonism. That is how Plato, the teacher of a dualistic ontology, which was a 'derivative system' of philosophy (''Ableitungssystem''), became the master of *classical metaphysics*.

This is too much for the excellent Paduan Aristotelian Enrico Berti[2]. Here he opposes to Krämer a vigorous and well-founded ''no''. What we mean by ''classical metaphysics'', is something different: it is not the two principles metaphysics Krämer is speaking of. That cannot be anything but an immanentistic explanation of the genesis of the world. However, the world has not come into being by a derivative process, which is supposed to be going on eternally and by necessity. Philosophically speaking the great mistake of this theory is, that it does not know a truly transcendent principle, one single and supreme Principle which is the Cause of everything, not by necessity, but by an act of the will. Plato saw this and spoke explicitly of a Builder of the world, who by mere goodness wished that there should be a world as perfect as is possible in the created order of relative things. We must take Plato seriously in that. Now we know the Plato of the dialogues as a philosopher who proved by argument that one first Principle of a really transcendent order has to be assumed. Aristotle in his way did the same. And this is what we usually call ''classical metaphysics'', not a system of derivation such as is found in Neoplatonism, which through Spinoza and Hegel leads to modern rationalism. The place of Plato is not there. He is the *auctor* of a metaphysics of transcendency.

To this argument two objections must be made. The first concerns the notion of a ''demiurge''. I think Plato does not give us sufficient grounds for speaking of this notion in such categorical tones as Berti does. It is clear to me that the Demiurge, as described in the *Timaeus*, is a trancendent *noûs*. ''Really transcendent'', that is, of an order ''beyond'' or ''preceding'' that of both visible things and of the Soul. For he ''makes'' both of them. He is also said to have been looking at a Divine example. Moreover, it is said that He is good, and acts from mere goodness. Are we entitled to say that He is ''*the* Good'', first and ultimate Principle, Cause of intelligible Being which is the eternal and perfect pattern of the visible world? Plato himself did not say so. On the contrary, there is clearly a certain distance between the Good of *Rep.* VI and VII, which is

[2] E. Berti, ''Il Platone di Krämer e la metafisica classica'', in: *Rivista di Filosofia Neoscolastica* 75 (1983), 313-326.

the Absolute Principle, and the Demiurge of the *Timaeus*. The ''tale'' of the creation of the world in the *Timaeus* is mythical, exactly in that it personifies a transcendent *Noûs*. That this *Noûs* is looking at a Divine pattern or example, presents no difficulty to someone like Philo of Alexandria who, while familiar with the notion of an absolute God-Creator, could understand the eternal pattern as present in the Divine Mind itself[3]. Plato could not. For his first Principle, the Good, was neither conceived as a thinking Mind nor as a Will. The distance between this abstract Principle and the Demiurge, even when we take the latter as symbolizing a divine Intellect, remains.

The second objection to be raised refers to the concept of emanation. Berti uses it in the sense the scholastics gave it: emanation is a natural process which works by necessity; it is opposed to creation, which is a conscious act of the will, contingent, for the divine Will is free. Berti applies this to any derivative system[4], to Plato in so far as his philosophy must be explained as such, and to Neoplatonism, from Plotinus down to any later developments. No exception is made, since the proprium of this school is the doctrine of the hypostases: the lower ones proceed from the higher, the ''many'' from the One; a natural process indeed, which could not be otherwise. For ''whatever is perfect always brings forth''[5].

In this the scholastics followed their own logic, without heeding what Plotinus says himself. For if one follows Plotinus' argument, one will find that this philosopher is always trying, and with the utmost care, to describe the origin of something coming ''after'' the First in such a way, that the transcendency of the First is strictly maintained. The expression that ''so great a multiplicity of things has flown from it'' (ἐξερρύη, V 1, 6.7), is used in a report of ''what is always said'' (τὸ θρυλλούμενον δὴ τοῦτο, ibid., 3f.). Plotinus' own account begins only after this sentence, with the words ''Thus, then, be it stated'' (Ὧδε οὖν λεγέσθω, ibid., 8f.). And here, after a prayer, he first of all makes clear that the One remains within itself, ''beyond all things'' (ibid., 13), not turning towards anything else, not moving, remaining in perfect rest, just turned to itself (16-19, 22-27). How then is there anything round about it?

''A radiance shines from it, a splendid light'', Plotinus declares (ibid.

[3] Philo, *De mundi opificio* 6, 24. See for this passage my section on Philo in the essay ''Platonism and Christianity: A mere antagonism or a profound common ground''? in *Vigiliae Christ.* 39 (1985), 1-62. Also J. C. M. van Winden, ''The world of ideas in Philo of Alexandria'', in *Vig. Chr.* 37 (1983), 209-217.

[4] The adjective 'derivative' is constantly used by Berti. I keep it to follow his argument as closely as possible.

[5] Plotinus, *Enn.* V 1, 6.37-38.

28f.). The image occurs frequently in Plotinus[6]. When "*genesis*" or "*gennèsis*" has been mentioned, the natural sense of these terms, in which time is presupposed, is indignantly excluded (V 1, 6.19f.). There is no question of interdependence or reciprocity. "The *Noûs* sees the First and needs it", Plotinus declares, "the First, however, has no need of *Noûs*" (ibid., 41f.[7]). "Every creature (πᾶν) longs for its father and loves him" (ibid. 50). Plotinus uses the neuter, τὸ γεννῆσαν; he does not say that the parent always loves its offspring[7]. He does say that *Noûs* is not cut off from its parent: he (*Noûs*) sees It (the First), not separated from It (οὐ χωρισθείς, ibid. 48); but even when being together with It, *Noûs* is distinguished from It by being different (ἑτερότητι μόνον κεχωρίσθαι, ibid. 53).

We call *Noûs* an image of the First. So there is a certain similarity, though never identity. *How* then is it that the First produces *Noûs*? Plotinus instantly asks[8]. He replies: "By turning to Itself *It sees*, and this seeing is Noûs"[9]. Elsewhere he speaks of θεωρία.

Does that fit in with the classical concept of emanation? G. Reale, who studied Plotinus' text precisely, observed that it does not[10]. And even Zeller noticed the incongruency.

Reale is right, no doubt, in observing that for Plotinus the One is truly the Absolute, marked by transcendency. Its activity (ἐνέργεια) is free and founded in itself, its Will is identical with its Essence (VI 8, 7 and 13). This is not a philosophy of immanency. There is neither a "flowing out" nor a "flowing back". *Noûs* turns to the One in free contemplation, and likewise the Soul turns to *Noûs*. This is a spiritual activity, not to be equated to a natural process. And πρόοδος is not a process in time, but denotes logical dependence.

Reale thinks Plotinus innovated in two important respects: first, in that, while Aristotle had posited categorically that it does not make sense further to inquire about the ultimate *archè*, Plotinus stubbornly asked after the "Why" and the "how"; second, while in Greek thought "Form", measure and "seeing" are predominant, Plotinus overcomes

[6] E.g. *Enn.* IV 3, 17.12-16. See my *Gr.Phil.* III, 1365b. More passages are mentioned in the Index III, s.v. φῶς and φωτίζειν.

[7] Also in III 8, 11.15-17.

[8] The text has sometimes been misunderstood in this sense. The insertion of τὸ γεγεννημένον dates from Eusebius. Henry-Schwyzer, ed. mai. 1959, give the right explanation.

[9] V 1, 7.5-6.

[10] G. Reale, "I fondamenti della metafisica di Plotino e la struttura della processione", in: *Graceful Reason*, Essays in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy presented to Joseph Owens CSSR, ed. Lloyd P. Gerson, Toronto (P.I.M.S.) 1983, 153-175, esp. 162. Earlier: G. Reale in Autori Vari, *Metafisica e Ontologia*, Padua 1978, 11-13, and G. Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica*, vol. 4, Milan 1978, ^{3}1981, 459-616.

this preponderance of the Form: he states that the First and ultimate Principle is formless. "This opens completely new horizons, which bring us beyond the Greek spirit", Reale concludes[11]: "exactly the horizons of the boundless and of contemplation shift into the vision of the infinite".

Why the One? Plotinus asked that question in order to answer certain Gnostic views and theories of those days. To those views he opposes his reply: the One is absolutely free, not bent to anything, remaining in itself in perfect self-sufficiency. It is self-creating activity, Love turned to itself, seeing itself, self-contemplation[12].

Why and how do the many spring from the One? I quoted Plotinus' description given in V 1, 6. Reale quotes V, 2.22-38: The activity of the One is a free activity, and a remaining in itself. The activity that springs from it (ἡ ἀπ' ἐκείνης) follows necessarily, and is different from it. This general energy "got an existence of its own" (ὑπόστασιν λαβοῦσα) because it comes from a great power, yes, the greatest of all; and so it is that it has come to Being. For the First itself is beyond Being.

Reale comments: The activity which "necessarily" follows from the First, is a *willed* necessity, a "necessità voluta"; for it follows from the essence of the One, which wills itself to be such as it is[13]. "And that should be enough to destruct the emanationistic exegesis".

For his second point, Form and the indefinite, he refers first to V 8, 7.18-24, which might indeed be summarized in the formula "the triumph of the Form". And no wonder, for in this chapter Plotinus is concerned with the creation of the visible world, which received Forms from that which was "before" it. For one must not imagine, so Plotinus said, that the Maker of this world of ours deliberated and worked after a design, as if there were hands and instruments to construct it. No, "hands and feet are later", and discursive reasoning as well. But everything here existed elsewhere in a perfect way, with greater beauty. And by the immediate neighbourhood[14] there suddenly appeared an

[11] *Graceful Reason*, 175.

[12] Reale, *o.c.*, 159-161.

[13] Reale, *o.c.*, 162, with a reference to Rist, *Plotinus' Road to Reality*, Cambridge 1967, 83.

[14] The reader of today might feel tempted to write: 'through the immediate proximity'. Plotinus, however, though extremely well aware that he is speaking of *noetic* reality which is 'beyond' space, did not shun the word 'neighbourhood', and that in an instrumental dative: τῇ ... γειτονείᾳ. The passage is difficult, of course. How should it not be, since it treats of the 'how' of divine Providence. Yet, no other language would work as evocatively as that which Plotinus uses here.—Plotinus' rejection of a demiurge working as a human craftsman might well be directed against Philo of Alexandria, *De mundi opif.* 4.16-5.20, summarized in 6.24. Plot. V 8, 7.1ff. is treated by M. Baltes, *Die Weltenstehung des platonischen Timaios nach den Antiken Interpreten*, Part I = Ph.A.30, Leiden 1976, 130ff. On p. 132 the reader will find his translation of the ll. 12-16 (with comments). Cf. E. Bréhier's 'Introd.' to the treatise V 8 in the Coll. Budé ed., Paris 1931;

image, a likeness of that other world. "For all things come from yonder". Here, then, things are in the grip of Forms, from the beginning to the end. All is Form here, even Matter; for the Model is Form. This is, however, not the last word. For *Noûs* is not the highest Principle. He springs from what is beyond: the One. And this is what *gives* Form, but is formless itself. This can be read repeatedly in *Enn.* VI 7, 17.18 and 26, and again in VI 7, 33. Here Form is declared to be "a trace of the formless" (30), "for it is the Formless which brings forth the Form, not the Form the Formless".

Are we faced with a late development, some Gnostic feature in Plotinus? Instead of promptly speaking of "Gnostic influences" we have to remember that for Plato the ἄπειρον was quite an important principle, which he deliberately assumed in order to explain multiplicity. It is clear that it had its function on every level of being. We have no evidence, however, for supposing that he somehow absorbed it in his first Principle, the One; it is more likely that this was not the case, the ἄπειρον appearing in a subordinate position. Compared with Plato, then, Plotinus innovated, when he, *in a sense* and not without qualification, admitted the boundless in to the very First. Not, of course, in the sense of infinite size. But *its Power* is without limits (V 5, 10.18). G. Reale welcomes this feature of Plotinian metaphysics with great enthusiasm. Completely new horizons are disclosed here: the vision of *the infinite* is opened in a posivite sense. This brings us beyond the Greek spirit.

Reale leaves us with the question, whether there are sufficient grounds to separate Plotinus as a non-emanentistic metaphysician from later Neoplatonists, in particular from Proclus. For after all, Proclus posits his First Principle as completely transcendent, non-participable, though it is the Cause of all things. Moreover, he too, not different from Plotinus, teaches that things that come "later" are always of a lower level, and thus, never "of the substance" of the One. If the One is said to be present on a lower level, even on that of sensible things, it is not the One itself—this "remains in itself"—but its Power or its Energy. On the other hand, are there not certain "emanentistic features" in Plotinus' thought as well as in Proclus's?

The following points have to come into consideration.

1. Though Plotinus, in speaking of the forthcoming of "the many" from the One, uses the image of radiation with a certain preference, he does

text and Fr. transl. of ch. 7, p. 143. Also R. Harder-W. Theiler, *Plotins Schriften*, Bd. IIIa, text and German transl., (Ph. B. Hamburg 1964), p. 50f. Henry-Schwyzer, ed. mai., Louvain 1959, p. 392-395, gives the Greek text together with an Engl. transl. of the Arabic version in the so-called Theologia Aristotelis. The OCT ed. of 1977 does not contain the Arabic parallel. The apparatus gives a note to l. 14: πρὸς ἄλλο ... *ad inferius*.

not hesitate to speak of overflowing by superabundance, and of a stream, which perpetually flows from an everstreaming source, which itself remains what it is[15].

2. However, if one concludes from this image that "the overflow" is not clearly distinguished from the source, but is "basically" identical with it, one goes against Plotinus' emphatically expressed intention. For the first of the two passages referred to, in which the simile of source and rivers occurs, is immediately preceded by a chapter in which it is expounded that *Noûs* is primary Life, since it is an activity from which all things go out; holding all things distinctly and not as an undifferentiated whole. It cannot be the *archè*, but must depend on something else, which is the origin of all things. For "all things" are not an origin, and the origin (*archè*) is not "all things"[16].

The other passage, V 2, expounds the forthcoming of the whole chain of being in a more succinct form, and in rather cryptic contradictions. "The One is all things and it is not one of them. For the Origin of all things is not all things. But in its transcendence It is all things; for they run as it were back to Yonder. Or rather, they are as yet not there, but they will come there.—How, then, can that be: from One in its simplicity, in which no trace of multiplicity appears, no doubling whatsoever?—Yet, because nothing was in It, therefore all things are from It, and in order that Being might come forth, therefore It is in itself no Being, but its Parent. And this is so to speak the archetype of generation. For being perfect, by not seeking anything, by not possessing nor needing, It as it were flew over, and its superabundance has produced something else. And this, which had come into being, turned to It and was brought to fullness, and looking at It it became *Noûs*"[17].

3. There is, in any case, in Plotinus' description some kind of emanative process. There is not, anyway, anything like a will to creation in the One. Something comes into being, while the One remains in itself and, as it were, turned to itself. It is very different, indeed, from the Jewish and Christian Creator-God. And in this Plotinus does not differ from later Neoplatonism, in particular from Proclus.

4. On the other hand, no metaphysics of immanency can be attributed, neither to Plotinus nor to Proclus, if "immanency" means that the First-itself (according to its substance, as it is said) would be present at lower levels, so that the First Principle would not be conceived as really

[15] *Enn.* III 8, 10.3ff.; V 2,1.8 and 14-16. These texts are commented on by L. Sweeney in *Graceful Reason*, 185ff.

[16] *Enn.* III 8, 9.34-55.

[17] V 2, 1.1-11.

transcendent. Both Plotinus and Proclus speak of a presence of the First, even on the level of sensible things, but it is present there by its Power and Energy.

No other conclusion is justified, it seems, but that the term of "emanation" in its usual sense, which is bound up with immanentism, does not apply either to Plotinian or Proclean metaphysics. A few further distinctions have to be made. Granting that in neither of these philosophers the notion of creation, as a conscious act of the Will of God, is found; granting, moreover, that Plotinus explicitly rejects the idea of God-the Divine Mind as working after deliberate planning[18], we have to acknowledge that these Neoplatonic philosophers conceived of the First Principle as definitely transcendent. That which comes from It is of a different kind—it is ἄλλο. Certainly there is a likeness. Sometimes the word "participation" is used. "All things participate in the Good", in its Power, and nothing can have It as a whole; for nothing is equal to It, though there is a similarity[19]. Its presence at lower levels is never a total and immediate presence; It is indirectly present by its Power, and in an analogical sense.

There is a return to It, yet not as an automatical process, but as a spiritual event, by a decision of the will of rational beings. So it is at least in Plotinus, when he is speaking of the return of the Soul to her Father, the *Noûs*[20]. In sofar as Proclus is concerned, in his *Elements of theology* he certainly presents the procession/reversion-scheme as a natural process, extending from lifeless physical objects to "knowing" beings[21]. Proclus the rationalist speaks of a natural striving of all existing things for "the better". In his view rational beings are characterized by their "knowing" faculty. This is, no doubt, a noteworthy difference. For Proclus' approach is essentially Aristotelian, much more so than Plotinus' view of the same things. For both these authors, however, there is no question of interdependence, as if the First would need anything. That is far from Platonic thinking.

Certainly, there have been later developments, in which these elementary principles of Platonic metaphysics were forgotten or no longer understood. So it was in the Middle Ages with Amalric of Bena[22] and in another way with David of Dinant. The idea of interdependence

[18] *Enn.* V 8, 7.1-16, 36-44 looks very much like a rejection of Philo's simile of the architect going to construct a great city (*Opif.* 4, 16-5, 20, summarized in 6, 24).

[19] V 5, 10.1-5.

[20] *Infra*, ch. V, *ad* V 1.1ff.

[21] *Elem.th.*, prop. 32, 34, 39.

[22] W. Beierwaltes, "Marginalien zu Eriugenas Platonismus", in *Platonismus und Christentum*, Festschr. H. Dörrie, 1983, 64-74, espec. 70, gives precise information.

occurs in German mystics, in Meister Eckhardt and the 17th-century Angelus Silezius. The idea of reciprocity, however, is against the essence of Platonic metaphysics.

I do not think, then, that a straight line can be drawn from Plato's two principles doctrine through Neoplatonism "and Spinoza" to modern rationalism[23]. Krämer's dualistic Plato has rather to be tempered and modified into a philosopher of an essentially monistic character, in whose thought the second principle, the Indefinite, took a subordinate place. The same is seen in Neoplatonism, in Plotinus as well as in Proclus. With Spinoza we enter a rather different world, which, in spite of its mathematical presentation, appears to me as more essentially Stoic than Platonic. However this may be, the philosophy of transcendency to which Berti wishes to adhere as the "classical metaphysics", is, I think, solidly founded in Plato, nor has it been betrayed by the Neoplatonism of Antiquity.

[23] Dr. Stephen Gersh in his interesting study *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, Leiden 1978, (Studien zur Problemgeschichte der antiken u. mittelalterl. Philos., hrsg. J. Hirschberger, Frankf./M. no. 8), touches on the relationship of both Spinoza and Hegel with Neoplatonism (Introd., p. 2-3). In his opinion Spinoza was "close" to the notion of emanation found *i.a.* in the Neoplatonism of the Athenian School, and particularly in Damascius. For the latter took the derivation of lower metaphysical principles from the One as a sequence of attitudes on the part of "a percipient mind". However, "close" is rather a subjective notion. Further, it must be noticed that "*a* percipient mind" is not *the* percipient mind of you or me. What Damascius meant by it, was, no doubt, the transcendent and eternal divine Intellect or *Noûs*. And in this he was certainly akin to Plato, though the ancient Greek thinker expressed himself in rather different terms. Important is, that for either of them, for Plato as well as for Damascius, the divine *Noûs*, who is the Cause and contains the archetypes of "lower things", was definitely not identical with the First Principle, the πρῶτον or the ἕν, but was considered as finding itself, metaphysically speaking, at rather a considerable distance from it, at a lower level. Spinoza's Deus-Natura is a quite different conception. In spite of certain similarities with late (Neo)platonic thought, it is more essentially Stoic than Platonic. But of course, the judgment about its essential character depends on what one thinks to be the essential of Platonism.

CHAPTER FIVE

AETERNA VERITAS

1. *Present-day problems concerning Neoplatonism and Christianity* *

Plotinus' treatise on *The three basic Hypostases* opens with the following question:

> "What can it be that has brought the souls to forget God, their father, and, while being fragments from that World Yonder and belonging totally to Him, to ignore both themselves and Him?[1]

The Christian of to-day can hardly read or hear these words of a Greek philosopher of the third century, a pagan, as it is usually said, without remembering his own situation: those numerous "souls" that in our days literally do not know any more from where they are and have forgotten God their father, "like children", Plotinus adds, "who, wrenched very young from their fathers and brought up during many years at a distance, neither know who they are themselves nor have any knowledge of their fathers."[2]

Plotinus describes the condition of such souls as follows.

> "They have lost sight both of Him and of themselves, and have come to despise themselves by ignorance of their origin; they misplace their respect, honouring everything more than themselves. All their awe and admiration is for the alien. This they love, this they choose more than everything, and they make light of what they have left. That is how their regard for the things-here and their disregard of themselves bring about their utter ignorance of Him. For admiring pursuit of something else is confessing that one feels inferior to it. Now if a subject thus holds itself inferior to things that come to be and pass away, and counts itself the least honourable and enduring of all things it admires, it cannot possibly form any notion of either the nature or the power of God."[3]

As philologians who are concerned with the study of Ancient philosophy we have a few questions to ask about this text. What is meant by certain terms used in it and what is their background?

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* This lecture was for the greater part delivered on the occasion of taking my leave of the University of Utrecht, 23 January 1974.

[1] I used Mac Kenna's translation and owe him a great deal. The reader must take the use of "him" with reference to "the world yonder" as a faithful rendering of Plotinus' text. To us it sounds incorrect.

[2] *Enn.* V 1, 1.8-10.

[3] Ibid., 11-22.

My first question is this: Of what did Plotinus think when writing that the souls had forgotten "God their father"? Did he think of the One? That is what a 20th-century reader who comes from a world of thinking that is more or less informed by either Christian or Jewish notions about God, might think at the first glance. Or did Plotinus primarily think of *Noûs*, the intelligible Reality, which he called "a great God", yes, the universal God, though not the highest?[4]

A second question concerns the words that follow immediately: "while yet they are parts from Yonder and belong entirely to Him." καὶ μοίρας ἐκεῖθεν οὔσας. The ἐκεῖθεν, followed by an ἐκείνου, refers no doubt to a masculine pronoun, ἐκεῖνος, not to a neuter. That appears from what follows: ἀγνοῆσαι καὶ ἑαυτὰς καὶ ἐκεῖνον, "to ignore both themselves and Him". Though this points rather to the *Noûs* than to the One, the words in themselves are not conclusive: the "Him" can also refer back to "the father", by which either the *Noûs* or the One may be meant. However, the formula "being parts from Yonder" indicates rather clearly that Plotinus was thinking primarily of *Noûs*. He was certainly too good a philosopher to have said that souls were "parts of the One." He took the notion of Unity strictly, though admitting that "all things" were potentially present in the One[5]. Indeed, from *his* way of thinking we can understand quite well that in speaking of "the Father", Plotinus thought primarily of *Noûs*: for Soul springs immediately from *Noûs*, and in its ascent it "sees" Him first, before it can catch sight of the One[6]. *Noûs* is as a tremendous Beauty, which to the eye of our mind precedes the Great King. He is a great God, and, because identic with universal Being, he is "the" universal God,—though not the First. For universal Being (τὰ ὄντα πάντα) has the differentiation of plurality within itself, and therefore it cannot be the ultimate Ground[7].

But what are we to think of the lines that follow the opening sentence of this ch. V 1? They run as follows.

> "The evil that has overtaken them had its source in self-will (*tolma*), in the entry into the sphere of process, and in the primal differentiation (ἡ πρώτη ἑτερότης) with the desire for self-ownership."

In Neoplatonic thinking, from Plotinus on, the "primal differentiation" occurs not in the One or the First, but appears involved in Being, that is, in the primary, intelligible Being, which is the first to spring from

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[4] *Enn.* V 5, 3. See my *Gr.Phil.* III, 1382d, with a note under the text.

[5] *Enn.* VI 8, 18.1-3; VI 8, 21.19-22. In my *Gr.Phil.* III nos. 1364b and c. Cf. also 1398b.

[6] *Enn.* V 3 (*Gr.Phil.* 1382d), cited above.

[7] *Enn.* III 8, 9.39-44 (*Gr.Phil.* 1390d). Cf. also 1390a-c. Many passages could be cited. Very clear is e.g. V 3, 11.26-31.

the One. This Being bears in itself a principle of differentiation by which it becomes a plurality, be it a plurality that knows no spatial bounderies[8]. Intelligible Being is a unity in its multiplicity, an organical, articulated unity, just as in that world yonder the many souls are one in the universal Soul. ''The souls are apart without partition present to each other without estrangement''[9]. In these terms Plotinus expresses himself in a wonderful passage in the Sixth Ennead, where he says that the plurality of souls has its roots not in the plurality of bodies,—in Aristotelian terms: ''Matter'' as the principle of differentiation,—but in a pre-existing differentiation on the level of noetic, transcendent Being.

The notion of *tolma*—over-boldness, presumption—occurs in one other passage of Plotinus, where he speaks about *Noûs*, which ''in a sense'' (πως) ''has dared secession from the One''. The idea of secession is mitigated by a πως, and the *unity* of *Noûs* is underlined: though it is not Unity-itself, it is similar to it. Mac Kenna renders: ''From this highest (sc. Unity-itself) it is not sundered; it too is self-present: so close to the unity, it cannot be articulated. And yet it is a principle which in some measure (πως) has dared secession''[10].

The term *tolma* indicates some kind of original sin, which consists in transgressing limits, set by a Divine Power. It is the Principle of the Indefinite which, ''after'' rather than ''beside'' the One, gives rise to ''the Other'': to *Being* in its multiplicity which yet is ''not sundered'', but ''present to itself'', and in its undividedness close to the First.

Plato had known that Principle of Infinity. He needed it to explain plurality at the level of intelligible Being. He certainly did not *derive* it from the One, though for him it had clearly a subordinate function. A later generation of Platonists came rather early to derive it from the First. This is what we find explicitly in Alexander Polyhistor's ''Pythagorean books'', which may date from the 2nd cent. B.C.[11].

Once more we find an account of what is said to be Pythagorean doctrine in that long chapter IV, ''Concerning Number'', in Sextus Empiricus' *Adv.Math.* X (= *Against the Physicists* II), which begins at 248 and from 263 to 276 is recognizable for us as transmitting Platonic doc-

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[8] *Enn.* VI 4, 4.23-26: τὸ ὂν πολλὰ συγχωροῦμεν εἶναι ἑτερότητι, οὐ τόπῳ. E.q.s.

[9] VI 4, 4.42-43: Διέστησαν γὰρ οὐ διεστῶσαι καὶ πάρεισιν ἀλλήλαις οὐχ ἀλλοτριωθεῖσαι. *Gr.Phil.* 1374c. In this passage the notion or term of τόλμα fails. The stress is rather on the *unity* of the multiplicity in the order of intelligible Being.

[10] VI 9, 5.26-29: οὐ διαρτήσας ἑαυτὸν τῷ πλησίον μετὰ τὸ ἓν εἶναι, ἀποστῆναι δέ πως τοῦ ἑνὸς τολμήσας.

[11] Alexander Polyhistor ap. Diog. Laert. VIII 25 (in my *Gr.Phil.* III, 1279a). On Plato's doctrine of the ultima principia see ch. XII of my ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ, Part I. I treated the matter more briefly in the paper on Plato's supposed dualism, ch. VI of the present volume, section 3.

trine. This passage, amply discussed elsewhere[12], leads to the two ultimate principles, the One and the indefinite Dyad, not reducible the one to the other. However, just a few sections before, in 261 of the same chapter, ''Pythagoras'' is said to have taught that the *monas* is the *archè* of all things existing, since by participation in it each of the existing things is called one; ''and this, when conceived *in its self-identity* (κατ' αὐτότητα μὲν ἑαυτῆς νοουμένην) is conceived as Oneness (μονάς), but when *in its otherness* it is added to itself (ἐπισυντεθεῖσαν δ' ἑαυτῇ καθ' ἑτερότητα), it produces the so-called indefinite Dyad''[13].

Here it is suggested indeed that the One may be, so to speak, viewed under the aspect of ἑτερότης, which thus is applied to it. This is certainly not Plato's way of thinking. Moreover, it must be noticed that the idea of *tolma* is far from the view taken in this text. That such a notion was alien to Plato's mind hardly needs to be mentioned. And was it not rather alien to Plotinus' way of thinking too? It may be said, no doubt, that Plotinus, in a sense at least, gave the opening to such an interpretation. For in so far as the One is the *archè* from which all Being springs, it may be said that *in principle* the multiplicity of ''beings'' must have been ''virtually'' in it; and multiplicity has its ground in ἑτερότης.

As a matter of fact, Plotinus *did* speak of δύναμις with reference to the First, *inter alia* in the treatise ''On nature and contemplation and the One'' (III 8, 10). In the preceding section the First is described as the ἀρχή of all, of life and of the Intellect and of all things. The Intellect is not one, and therefore cannot be the First. The One is origin. It is other than all things, and is before them.—''What is it then?'', Plotinus asks (10.1). The answer is: δύναμις τῶν πάντων. Which means: ''the productive power of all things.'' Armstrong[14] rightly warns that it should not be misunderstood as meaning ''potentiality'' in the Aristotelian sense. The One is supremely active. There is nothing passive, and nothing of multiplicity in it. Cf. VI 9, 6.6-12, referred to above (in no. 5): The One has no extension, but is infinitely great by its immense power[15]. The principle of ἑτερότης occurs not here, but at the second level, that of Being and *Noûs*.

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[12] The section 263-276 has got its place in my *Gr.Phil.* I, No. 371b. I often commented on it, first in the *Mnemosyne* article ''Problems concerning later Platonism'' (= Plato's later doctrine), 1949, 197-216, repr. in *Philosophia*, Part I, ch. XII; German transl. in Wippern, *Das Problem der ungeschriebenen Lehre*, 1972. Gaiser *Pl.u.L.* 1963, ^{2}1967, had the whole ch., 248-283, printed under No. 32. He commented amply on it in *Idee und Zahl*, 1968.

[13] On the monistic explanation offered in 258-261 I said a few words in my *Pythagoras and Early Pythagoreanism*, 208ff.

[14] Note to his transl. in the Loeb Cl.Libr.

[15] ἄπειρον τῷ ἀπεριλήπτῳ τῆς δυνάμεως (VI 9, 6.10-12).

Intelligible Being, then, comes "after" the One. It arises so to speak spontaneously, as a circle of Light, the first one that arises around the original and overwhelming Light of the First, which by its mighty splendour cannot but radiate around it. In this way it is described by Plotinus in the sixth chapter of the treatise "On the three basic hypostases": not at all as a kind of act of rebellion against "the Other", but rather as a wonderful sign of superabundance of the First; an overflowing or an overstreaming source, or also as the radiation of a mighty Light, which is at the centre, and naturally gives rise to circles of light around it[16]. On purpose Plotinus does not speak here of γένεσις, but of "generating": the Perfect and Divine eternally generating an eternal offspring[17]. There is not anything like *tolma* in this process.

Whence then comes that notion to this thinker? One could reply—as it was e.g. done by A. H. Armstrong[18]—that the rising of something else "after" or "beside" the One could in fact be viewed under this aspect. It is then regarded not from the side of the One, but qua ἕτερον, as opposed to the One. In that case it is seen as a kind of departing, which is felt to be an apostasy, from the First. And that would be due to that sinful overboldness, called *tolma*[19].

But is not such a way of thinking a strange element in Plotinus? Anyway, it does not fit the idea of superabundance, nor that of the ever-radiating Light. There is a certain personification implied in it: a revolting will is attributed to the "Other". This is the spiritual climate of the so-called *gnosis*: a tendency to dramatize the spiritual. And this is exactly what Plotinus rejected and detested. Armstrong is right when remarking that Plotinus surely did not borrow that way of thinking from Egyptian gnostic sects, which he criticized severely.

Whence then did he take it?

In a list of denominations which the Pythagoreans bestowed on numbers, Plutarch, *De Iside* 75 (381E) relates: "and the dyad they called strife and overboldness" (ἔρις καὶ τόλμα), "and the triad justice (δίκη); for since doing injustice and suffering it, is to be situated in excess and defect, equality and justice turn out to be in the middle."

[16] *Enn.* V 1, 6.7.28ff.; *Gr.Phil.* 1366.
[17] V 1, 6.37f.: τὸ δὴ ἀεὶ τέλειον ἀεὶ καὶ ἀίδιον γεννᾷ.
[18] *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, Cambridge 1967, p. 242ff.
[19] Armstrong, *o.c.*, refers firstly to III 8, 8.32-36, next, also to VI 9, 5.29. To the first mentioned passage, however,—in which τόλμα does not occur—he remarks in the note to his above-mentioned transl. that the view taken here of the generation of the Intellect is unusual for Plotinus in its pessimistic tone. I referred above (n. 10) to the other passage (VI 9, 5.29). Here both the terms of "falling away" from the One (ἀποστῆναι τοῦ ἑνός), and that of "daring" (τολμᾶν) are used.

The latter tells us that with this list of denominations we are finding ourselves in post-Platonic Pythagoreanism. Moreover, the *eris-* and *tolma*-notions give us good grounds to think that we are at a considerable distance from the above-mentioned Pythagorean books of Alexander Polyhistor: for in that monistically interpreted kind of Pythagoreanism the dyad is immediately derived from the One, and any trace of either *eris* or *tolma* is lacking. The same is true of that remarkable passage in Sextus Empiricus, *M* X 261, which even tends to take ἑτερότης up to the One itself, and thus to give it a legitimate place in the order of being. I think we have to date the *eris* and *tolma*-notions in Pythagoreanism not earlier than the first decades of the 2nd century, in which they probably stem from that same Manichaean influence which worked so strongly in Plutarch. Plotinus may have taken them from Numenius, who called himself a Pythagorean too, but opposed those Pythagoreans who wish to derive the indefinite principle from the One. In his doctrine of matter he was a marked dualist, much more so than Plotinus[20]. However, since Plotinus read and studied Numenius' works with a particular interest, it is most probable that this philosopher, who was so open to Oriental influences, was the intermediary of that part of gnostic influence in Plotinus. I am here following a suggestion which has been earlier made by E. R. Dodds[21].

In later Neoplatonic writers, first in Iamblichus' *Theologoumena arithmeticae*, the following quotation is found from Anatolius who, before becoming bishop of Laodicea (c.268), was professor of philosophy at Alexandria: "For twoness was the first to separate itself from the Monad, and that is why it is also called *tolma*"[22]. Lydus, *De mensibus*, attributes the same predicate to οἱ περὶ Φερεκύδην, a fragment which by Diels[23] is duly stamped as *spurium.* Proclus and Olympiodorus repeat it in their commentaries on the *Alcibiades*[24]. It is hardly tempting to suppose that the gnostic notion of *tolma* came to Plotinus from Anatolius and his circle at Alexandria, since Plotinus had certainly left that place about the time Anatolius was teaching there.

[20] See my *Gr.Phil.* III, 1353.
[21] E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an age of anxiety*, Cambridge 1965, 25. Dodds supposes it to have been an early influence, of which Plotinus freed himself completely in later years.
[22] Iamblichus, *Theol.Arithm.* 2, p. 9.5-6 de Falco: πρώτη γὰρ ἡ δυὰς διεχώρισεν αὐτὴν ἐκ τῆς μονάδος.
[23] Diels-Kranz, *VS*[6] 7, B 14.
[24] All references are given by Henry-Schwyzer, *Plotinus* II, p. 260 (ed. maior). The ed. minor (Oxford 1977) adds Hermias *In Phaedr.* 2.129, and, with another "cf.", Plato, *Polit.* 310e1. The word is read there indeed, though in a very different context (about human characters lacking a certain measure of τόλμη ἀνδρεία).

For the rest, distinction must be made between those passages in which Plotinus is speaking of individual human souls, who by their own free choice have turned away from Divine Being—that is, the *Noûs* —which is above them and "from where they are", and on the other hand, those passages in which he is speaking of that Being which in its multiplicity has come to exist "after", and in a sense to stand over against Unity[25]. In the opening sentence of V 1 it is human souls that are the subject. The "Father", whom they have left by self-will, is the *Noûs*. They have gone away from him deliberately. "Apparently they took a pleasure in their independence: they largely used the faculty of moving by themselves. Thus they ran in the opposite direction, and in the end, drifting further and further away, they came to lose even the knowledge of their origin from Yonder"[26].

Metaphysically speaking there may be a "primal differentiation" (πρώτη ἑτερότης) at the level of primordial Being behind this event; yet we are finding ourselves here confronted with individual human souls, who by some *personal* evil boldness chose not to stay "above" in the undivided All-Soul[27], but to be "on themselves", in their own, independent existence; thus they have run "in the opposite direction", away from Unity turned to plurality. This they have done, not in the spirit of obediently accepting a task to be fulfilled, but just rejoicing in their freedom. That is how they have turned off from their Origin, and have sought "the other". In Christian terms one could say, as St. Paul wrote to Timothy: they "have loved this present world"[28].

Now in our days "this world" is held in high honour, and a Christian can hardly permit himself not to love the world. Moreover, this modern sympathy for the world is often opposed to the ancient-style *contemptus mundi*, which is especially ascribed to Plato. How much of this is due to

[25] *Enn.* III 8, 8.30-40 deals with *Noûs*, which even in its contemplation of the One necessarily sees it as many and so becomes a multiplicity. The Intellect (*Noûs*) is described here as beginning as one, but as it were heavy by the germs of multiplicity, "it unrolled itself because it wanted to possess everything." Plotinus adds: "How much better it would have been for it not to want this!" For the centre from which the radiating rays go out, is better than the circumference. In this passage the word *tolma* does not occur, but the superiority of the One over *Noûs* is strongly marked. VI 9.5.29 is the only passage where a τολμᾶν of the *Noûs* is spoken of. Our passage (V 1, 1.3-5) speaks about τόλμα of the soul. Cf. III 7, 11.14ff. where soul is characterized as a φύσις πολυπράγμων "which wanted to control itself and be on its own" (transl. Armstrong), and, by chosing to seek for more than what is present to it, becomes the cause of Time (*Gr.Phil.* 1434c).

[26] V 1, 2.5-8.

[27] Cf. IV 3, 4.21-37 (*Gr.Phil.* 1373a): the All-Soul stays always "above", our individual souls, on the contrary, have "descended". Their task is to take upon them the care of a body.

[28] II Tim. 4.10. Cf. Rom. 12.2; also 1 Joh. 2.15-17.

ignorance and misunderstanding, I explained elsewhere[29]. Both Plato and Plotinus knew perfectly well that the task of man lies in this world, and they acted according to this insight. As for their view of the physical world, it must be briefly remembered in the present context that precisely these philosophers saw the world as a beautiful work of art, made by a Divine Architect according to a pattern existing in a higher Order. We shall have to say a word of this later. At present, the opening sentence of *Enn.* V, 1 gives us good reason to make the following point.

For Plotinus the fact that "the souls" have forgotten God their Father has its ground in *the will*, in *the inner disposition of* those persons. The "descent" in itself, the condition of being bound in a body, does not necessarily lead to an estrangement from the Origin. That depends on each particular soul[30]. It has to take care of the body that is confided to it. But it will only be able to fulfil that task if it holds the eye turned towards what is "above" it. As soon as it loses sight of that higher Reality, it will lose its innermost spiritual being: a soul that rendered itself totally to things-here, has lost its creativity[31].

This severe word was spoken by Plotinus. Yet, for him the soul that went astray, is never totally lost: on the contrary, something of its Origin always remains within it[32]. Even if it gives itself too much to the sensible world, it is always open to it to emerge[33].

Therefore, in V 1.1, after having made his diagnosis, Plotinus prescribes a therapy. People of the above-described mental condition must be addressed in two ways: (1) One must show them the worthlessness of those things they now hold in honour; (2) one must recall to the soul its race and dignity.

The next chapter gives us an impressive picture of the saving self-reflection of the Soul. "First, then, let every soul recall the fact that it is itself the author of all living beings, that it has breathed the life into them all, whatever is nourished by earth and sea, what lives in the air and the divine stars in the heavens; that it is the Maker of the sun and of this vast heaven: the soul itself ordered it and conducts its regular motion—and all this while being itself different from that to which it gives order,

[29] In my ch. on Plato's supposed "dualism". *Infra*, ch. VI.

[30] *Enn.* IV 8, 4-5. See my *Gr.Phil.* III, 1375c and 1377, with annotation.

[31] Beside a passage such as IV 8, 4.10-30 see also e.g. II 9, 4.1-10, espec. l 8: εἰ δὲ ἐπελάθετο, πῶς δημιουργεῖ;

[32] IV 8, 4.30f.: Ἔχει γὰρ οὐδὲν ἧττον ὑπερέχον τι.

[33] V 1, 2.9: αὐτὴ δὲ οὖσα ἀεὶ τῷ μὴ ἀπολείπειν ἑαυτήν. "But soul, since it never can abandon itself, is of eternal being" (transl. Mac Kenna). The μὴ ἀπολείπειν, however, depends on the soul's own will. Cf. V 1, 5. After describing the Intellectual Cosmos, which is manifold, Plotinus goes on: "As a manifold, then, this God, the Intellectual-Principle, exists above the Soul here, the Soul which once for all stands linked a member of the Divine, *unless by a deliberate apostasy*" (εἰ μὴ ἀποστατεῖν ἐθέλοι).

motion and life. For it must of necessity be of a higher rank than all these things, which come into being and perish again when the soul leaves them, the soul which leads the rhythmic motion of life: since it never can abandon itself, it is of eternal being.

Let the soul next consider the mode in which it functions as the source of life, both for the universe as a whole and for the individual living beings. It must look at the Great Soul, being another soul itself, and not a small one. It must make itself worthy of that vision by freeing itself from lure, from all that holds bound other souls in bewitchment, holding itself in quietude. Let not only its enveloping body be at peace, body's turmoil stilled, but all that lies around: earth at peace, and sea at peace, and air and the very heavens. Into that heaven, all at rest, let the great Soul be conceived as it were as flowing in and pouring in, and, at every point, entering and throwing in its light. As the rays of the sun throwing their brilliance upon a dark cloud make it gleam all gold, so the Soul entering the material expanse of the heavens, gave it life and gave it immortality, and lifted up what was lying down. And the heavenly system, moved now in endless motion by the Soul that leads it in wisdom, has become a blessed living being. It got its dignity because the Soul entered to dwell in it. Before, it was no more than a dead body, earth and water, or rather "darkness of indefiniteness", non-being, yet, "the execration of the Gods", as an author says[34].

The Soul's power and nature will become clearer and brighter to us if we consider how it encompasses the heavens and leads them by its will. It has given itself to all that huge expanse, so that every interval, great and small alike, all has been ensouled[35]. The body of the universe is made up of parts, dispersed and separated from each other. But Soul is not like that. It remains one and undivided. It gives life to all things by being present in its entirety. It is present everywhere, resembling the Father who generated it, entire in unity and entire in diffused variety. The heavenly system too, though a plurality with different parts, is a unity by the power of the soul, and through it this world here is a god. The sun too is a god, because he is an ensouled living being, and so the other heavenly bodies are. And lastly, we ourselves, if there is anything divine in us, it is through the presence of Soul. For "dead bodies are viler than dung"[36].

This then, which for gods is cause of their being gods, must be a God of a higher order than theirs. But our soul too is of the same kind, and

[34] Homer, Iliad 20.65.
[35] Plato, *Tim.* 34b.
[36] Heraclitus, fr. 96D.

when you consider it in a purified state, without those things that were later added to it[37], you will find the precious core which really is *Soul*, more precious than anything corporeal"[38].—

> (c.3) "If then Soul is such a precious and divine thing, rely then on this to come to God, and with such a help go upwards to Him: surely you will find Him not far away. For there is not much between. Take hold, then, of that which is still diviner than this: the Soul's Neighbour, above. The Soul comes after it and from it. For though soul has the grandeur we described, yet it is secondary: an image of the Intellect. Just as the word we pronounce is an image of the inner word or thought of the soul, exactly so the Soul is an utterance of the Divine Intellect[39]. It is its whole spiritual activity[40], the stream of life sent forth by Him to bring other things into being; like in fire there is indwelling heat, and also the heat it bestows on other things. So we must catch it that yonder there is a spiritual energy, a Soul, which is not poured forth, but stays in the Divine Mind, and another that comes to an existence of its own[41]. Since it has sprung from the Intellect, it is "intellective" (νοερά): its intellect works in discursive reasoning. It is perfected again by Divine Thinking, which has reared it like a father, who generated it, not as a perfect offspring when compared to Himself.
>
> Its existence, then, comes from *Noûs* (Divine Thinking), and its reason is in full activity when *Noûs* is seen by it.—Divine Intellect, then, makes it more divine, both by being its Father and by being present to it. For there is nothing between, but for their difference; and this is to be taken in the sense of a succession: the Soul is as the recipient, the Intellect as the Form."

Plotinus uses these terms with a ὡς: the relation of Soul to *Noûs* is "as it were" a relation of "matter" to "form". He adds: "But also the "matter" of *Noûs* is noble: it is similar to *Noûs* and simple"...

We listened a long time to Plotinus, hardly interrupting him either by explanations of shortenings. Something of the great stillness of the self-reflection of the soul may be heard from his words. For a modern reader who is not used to Neoplatonist thought, the mention of so many gods may be more or less dazzling: the world is a god, for it is a living being, endowed with a soul; the sun, the stars and the heavens are gods, for they

[37] On the προσθῆκαι of the soul: *Enn.* IV 7, 13.2-13: ὄρεξις is a προσθήκη (*Gr.Phil.* 1375b) by which the soul differs from *Noûs*. Προσθῆκαι are also called τὰ προσγεγενημένα (II 3, 9.6-30; *Gr.Phil.* 1413b): the παθήματα of the lower soul, due to the conjunction with the body, are the cause of sin. See also I 1, 12.1-12, 17-21 (*Gr.Phil.* 1417b).
[38] V 1, 2.1-48. A few lines at the end of ch. 2 are omitted.
[39] λόγος ὁ ἐν προφορᾷ as opposed to ὁ ἐν ψυχῇ λόγος: the Stoics spoke of λόγος προφορικός and λόγος ἐνδιάθετος (Sextus Emp., *Adv.math.* VIII 275). The terms probably date from the days of Carneades and his discussions with the Stoics. See my note in *Gr.Phil.* III 965b.
[40] ἡ πᾶσα ἐνέργεια. Plotinus often uses this Aristotelian term, also of the One.
[41] τὴν δὲ ἄλλην ὑφισταμένην—comes to "hypostatic being".

are all ensouled living beings; the Soul itself, who gives them life, is a greater god,—but not yet a god whose name *we* would write with a capital. However, the Soul has a Father, and He is clearly of a superior order: Divine Thinking, *Noûs*. This is a great God, Plotinus says[42]. For *Noûs* is a Light that springs directly from the One[43]; Light from Light[44], a direct image of the Good[45]. He is the absolute and primary Thinking, eternal and intuitive, the Thinking that has its object within itself and is identical with it[46]. *Noûs is* intelligible Being. He is all things[47]. So He must be certainly "a great God", or rather, not *a* God, but GOD in his totality.

This is what Plotinus says,—following it up immediately by saying: "He shows himself as a *second God*, before we catch sight of HIM (the First). For THIS ONE thrones as it were above Him as on a noble pedestal, which depends on HIM (the First)"[48].

And that is then, finally, what "we" in our language would call "God",—so a modern reader might conclude. When doing so he will find himself in the company of some Catholic theologians who, during the last few decades, repeatedly and rather emphatically posited this thesis.

I am thinking, for example, of one of the editors of the Plotinus-text, Paul Henry, and after him of J. Trouillard. Why did they place so much emphasis on that thesis?

I think, with it they are in flat contradiction with Plotinus. For he held quite clearly a threefold notion of God, not in the sense of Christian faith, which takes the three to be equal and "basically" one—if it is allowed thus to express the essential unity—, but in the sense of subordination. He spoke of "God" on three levels: the One as the First and absolute, next Divine Thinking, which is identical with intelligible Being, and as a third, still divine but of a lower rank, Soul. The three are related as Father and Son, the One generating eternally the Divine Thinking, and Divine Thinking bringing forth Soul, as its eternal offspring. "So far we deal still with the Divine", Plotinus concludes his account of the three hypostases, at the end of ch. 7[49]. When he speaks of the world, the heavens, the sun and the stars as of gods, he does not speak

[42] V 5, 3.1-3 (*Gr.Phil.* 1382d).
[43] V 1, 6.27-30 (*Gr.Phil.* 1366: περίλαμψιν).
[44] V 3, 12.40-47 (*Gr.Phil.* 1382a); IV 3, 17.12-16 (*Gr.Ph.* 1865b).
[45] V 6, 4.6f. (*Gr.Phil.* 1382b). Also V 1, 6.14f. and V 6, 4.16-22.
[46] V 1, 4.10-29; V 3, 5.29-48; V 6, 1.5-14 (*Gr.Phil.* 1383). See also VI 2, cc. 20-21, and III 7, cc. 2-3 (*Gr.Phil.* 1433).
[47] V 8, 7 and 8 (*Gr.Phil.* 1384-85).
[48] V 5, 3.1-6 (*Gr.Phil.* 1382d).
[49] V 1, 7.48 (Mac Kenna).

about them as material beings, but in so far as Soul encompasses and pervades them. The boundary of the Divine is drawn by him strictly between Soul and what is "after" or "under" it. There is a gradation, because Divine Thinking is never strictly one, since it has the duplicity of subject-object in itself, while as intelligible Being it contains a principle of differentiation. Therefore, it cannot be the First and Highest. Gradation exists also between Divine Thinking and Soul, because Divine Thinking is one with its object and in its eternity sees all things present in itself at the same time, whereas the Soul has a discursive mode of thinking, which refers to what is outside itself. Moreover, it knows an "earlier" and "later", that is, it introduces a succession in time.

It had its good grounds, then, when in the first half of this century W. R. Inge, the author of a well-known work on Plotinus, then Dean of St. Paul's and known in London as "the gloomy Dean", used to speak of "the three Divine Principles", when he dealt with Plotinus' notion of Divinity[50].

In 1961 we had at Utrecht the visit of Paul Henry. In a crowded Senate's Hall, before theologians and philosophers, gathered under the supervising eye of Gisbertus Voetius[51], he declared it to be "absurd" to speak of "God" on three levels: this name can only be applied at the highest level. Therefore, so he concluded, if one wishes to speak about "the concept of God" in Plotinus, one has to speak about the One, and only about the One. From this conviction it was only logical that Henry, though of course he knew quite well that for Plotinus the One is beyond thinking and Being, tried to construct as much as possible a kind of "rational theology" of the One. Up to a certain extent this is possible. For Plotinus does not hesitate to call the One "the Good". However, he adds that in this highest Principle neither "one" nor "good" have the function of a predicate: "It *is* its unity" and "it *is* its goodness", so Plotinus says[52]. In the same way he can declare that the One *is* its Essence (οὐσία) and its activity (ἐνέργεια)[53], and in that sense he can ascribe a will to the First Principle: "His Will and his Essence are identical"[54]. In my *Greek Philosophy* I added a note to these passages,

[50] W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, 2 vol. Gifford Lectures of 1902-1904, again 1917-18; 3rd ed. London 1928, repr. 1948. The author was Dean of St.Paul's in London, 1911-34.
[51] A portrait of this 17th-century strictly Calvinist theologian, one of the first professors of theology of the University of Utrecht, which was founded in 1636, graces the back wall of the Senate's Hall. Voetius was the great opponent of Descartes.
[52] *Enn.* VI 9, 5.24-46; cf. VI 8, 8.12-16 (*Gr.Phil.* 1392c-d); V 5, 13.1-11 (*Gr.Phil.* 1393c) a.e.
[53] VI 8, 12.1-15 and 22-25 (*Gr.Phil.* 1393a).
[54] VI 8, 13.5-8 and 27-33 (*Gr.Phil.* 1393b).

referring to the great *Summa* of Aquinas, from which may be seen that the latter spoke on the so-called "properties of God" in exactly the same way[55].

Shall we join Henry and say with him that, according to the Christian usage, "God" in Plotinus was "the One" and only the One?

If we would do that, we would be seriously mistaken. For, speaking with Athanasius, in that case we would "bereave God of His Logos". Thereby, we would be far from having done justice to Plotinus in his thinking and inner experience of these deep things. For it must be remembered that for Plotinus there was no way for the soul to the Highest but through the life of *Noûs*, and in *Noûs*. And this implies a *katharsis*, a purification of the soul and, together with that, a training of the intellect. Only if one has passed through higher thinking, the soul can take in that other word: that "thinking must retreat". Plotinus means by it that the Soul now has arrived at the border of rationality, of both discursive and intuitive thinking; the soul has to leave it. The One is "beyond". It is ἐπ' ἔκεινα[56].

Let one proceed here with the greatest care. In the Gnostics, Henry knew, Plotinus detested nothing as much as their pretension of having a shorter and easier way to God, like a direct entry, a way which does not suppose any preparation of the soul or the intellect, or rather of both. That was, so he thought, based on a complete misunderstanding. For that which is *beyond* the intellect is not *below* it! It is not some kind of primitive, pre-rational life, which one can approach of in a state of intoxication, an excitement produced by drugs. Modern interpreters have too often misunderstood Plotinus in this sense.

Once, indeed, Plotinus expressed himself in terms that could be easily misunderstood. It is in a passage (VI 7,35.19-27) in which he speaks of the double function of *Noûs*: first, that of intuitively knowing intelligible Truth which it beholds within itself; second, that of "seeing" what is beyond it. Now this vision of the First, which is given to the Intellect when it "has abandoned all other things", "simplifies it": it is no longer thinking, but in "seeing" its beloved object, it forgets itself in the immediate Presence; it is united to it and comes to an "*eupatheia*" by satisfaction. For this experience of spiritual love—which is, I think, not so different from what Diotima expresses at the height of her speech[57]:

[55] *Greek Phil.* 1393, under *d.*

[56] *Enn.* III 8, 9.29-32. See also V 5, 8.1-25: One cannot say that the One "comes" somewhere and "goes away". It is *noûs* that comes and goes. And because he is *thinking*, he "sees", when he sees, "by means of that in himself which is not thinking" (*Gr.Phil.* 1389c). V 3, 17.23-28 ends by the words Ἄφελε πάντα (*Gr.Phil.* 1395b). Also in VI 8, 21.25-28 (*Gr.Phil.* 1399d).

[57] Plato, *Symp.* 211d-212a.

when the vision of the Beautiful-itself is attained, the subject is completely absorbed in contemplation; all desires are satisfied, there is εὐπάθεια κόρῳ—for this experience, then, Plotinus too uses metaphorical language: he *does* speak of "getting out of one's senses" (ἄφρων γένεσθαι), of being "drunk by nectar"; and that is how the mind, no longer thinking, but *fed by the heavenly drink*, is "*simplified*", united to the object of its love, happy by satisfaction.

We must not misunderstand this kind of language. The First is not "pre-intellectual life"[58]; it is "eternal *hypernoesis*"[59].

Does one understand Plotinus well, when declaring his doctrine of the One to be a "radical relativation of eternal Truth"? J. Trouillard explains it that way. "Le Principe n'est pas Vérité, comme le croira saint Augustin. Il n'y a pas de vérité absolue, puisque toute intelligibilité est dérivée et frappée de relativité"[60].

In writing so, Trouillard travels in a direction opposite to that of Paul Henry: while the latter tried to rationalize the One as much as possible, Trouillard speaks of a "disjunction" between the noetic and the Absolute. He is wrong. Plotinus was far from thinking that there is no eternal Truth. He does not think that Truth loses its absoluteness by springing from the One. On the contrary, for him that origin is the warranty of the Divine character of eternal Being which is Truth. Viewed from our side, it may appear as if there is a disjunction—and *in a sense* there is: "Leave all other things!" Plotinus said. And yet, the disjunction is not absolute: the gulf is bridged. *For viewed from the side of the One, there is no disjunction.* There is eternal relation: the relation of dependence. Which is an eternal link. Intelligible Being, which in an objective sense is Truth, comes forth eternally from the First and is never cut off from it. There remains eternal connectedness. If not, Divine Thinking (*Noûs*) would not be Divine Thinking.

This is Plotinus' doctrine. If anyone speaks here of a disjunction, he has forgotten that for this thinker *Noûs* was "a great God", and that in virtue of his eternal connectedness with the First. Augustine understood this well, much better indeed than Trouillard. When addressing God by the name *aeterna Veritas*, he does so because in the notion of the Divine

[58] I am afraid A. H. Armstrong, "Neoplatonic valuation of nature, being and intellect", in: *Augustinian Studies* 3 (1972), 50ff., more or less abuses the passage on the νοῦς ἐρῶν, bending towards an irrationalist interpretation.

[59] ὑπερνόησις ἀεὶ οὖσα. *Enn.* VI 8, 16-34.

[60] J. Trouillard, *Histoire de la Philosophie* I: *Le Néoplatonisme*, pp. 886-935 (Encyclopédie de la Pléade), cited by A. H. Armstrong in the above-cited paper, p. 51. Trouillard expounded the same ideas in an earlier paper, "Valeur critique de la mystique plotinienne", in: *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 59 (1961), 431-444.

Thinking, as conceived by the Greek philosopher, he recognized the Word of God, the *Logos*, who from all eternity is with the Father.

Augustine could achieve the identification on the basis of the Christian Creed. He did so explicitly[61]. No doubt in doing so he consciously applied a certain correction to Neoplatonist thought: that which there was conceived as existing on two different levels, this he united on one and the same. "For through Christian Faith we have learned that the Wisdom which is generated by the eternal Father, is equal to Him. Therefore, there is no more a problem in this; we have just to hold it fast with an unshaken belief."

That is Augustine in *De libero arbitrio*[62], the same who, a few years before, opened his *Soliloquia* with this prayer:

> "God, Father of Truth, Father of Wisdom; Father of the true and highest life, Father of blessedness, Father of the good and beautiful; Father of intelligible Light; Father of our waking up and being lighted, Father of the pledge by which we are exhorted to return to Thee, to Thee I call, God who art Truth, in whom and by whom and through whom is true all that is true. God who art Wisdom,—God intelligible Light, in whom and from whom and through whom all that radiate intelligible Light has its intelligible Light;—God whom we can leave only to perish, to whom we return for coming back to life;—God to whom Faith drives us, hope directs us, love joins us, Thee I supplicate.
>
> "God, through whom we do not give way to adversities; through whom petty things do not belittle us;—God who gives us strength and leads us in all truth;—God who calls us back to the right way and leads us to the door;—God who purifies us and prepares us to divine rewards, come to me in grace."[63]

Is that intellectualism? I think not. If our Christian theologians wish to learn *something* from Plotinus and Neoplatonism, I think they can, at least in this respect, better learn from Augustine than from those of our contemporaries who, on the track of Trouillard, tell them to take "truth" less strictly and thus think in a somewhat more "liberal" style[64]. By this I do not detract anything from the fact that both Trouillard and Armstrong, who follows him a bit too easily, have written also excellent things in their Plotinian and Neoplatonist studies.

As for the matter in hand, one must remember the fact that Dionysius the Areopagite, who had such a mighty influence on Eastern Christian

[61] Augustine, *De libero arbitrio* II 15, 39.

[62] The text runs as follows: Nam si te hoc movet quod apud sacrosanctam disciplinam Christi in fidem recepimus esse Patrem Sapientiae, memento nos etiam hoc in fidem recepisse, quod aeterno Patri sit aequalis quae ab ipso genita est Sapientia. Unde nunc nihil quaerendum est, sed inconcussa fide retinendum.

[63] Augustine, *Soliloqua* I 1, 2-3 (abridged).

[64] Thus A. H. Armstrong in the above-cited article in *Augustinian Studies* 1972, 51ff.

thought and is regarded as the auctor of Negative Theology, yet did not make the disjunction between the Deus absconditus and the Father who revealed Himself in the Son. In this Christian tradition is one and undivided. It is the same God who "dwells in an inaccessible Light" and who has come to us in Christ.

Quite a different aspect of the problems about Neoplatonism and Christianity was brought forward by A. H. Armstrong in the volume offered to J. H. Waszink, Sept. 1973. In these few pages the Author deals with the question: in which measure the visible world had, or has still, a religious meaning for man, both for the Neoplatonically minded pagan and for the Christian. He points to the fact that for the Neoplatonist pagan the visible world was the only form of "*theophany*", while for the Christian the appearance of God has been realized in its fulness in the one man Jesus Christ. This gives to Christianity a new and radical kind of anthropocentrism. Together with this selfrevelation of God Armstrong always mentions the Church. In the Church material things are used as means of revelation and salvation,—in the Church only. Now that the Church has ceased to have a dominating meaning for most Europeans, the great mass of man has been left in a world without any appearance of God, a profane world. Would not in this way the anthropomorphism of the Church have become an important cause of the attitude of modern man towards nature, and have contributed a great deal to the fact that for modern man nature has become an object of exploitation? Only a few poets and artists continued to find something divine in the cosmos....

Or is that saying too much? "Many Christian thinkers have absorbed a great deal of the way of thinking which I have characterized as "pagan" Neoplatonism, and have often happily combined it with elements of the Biblical tradition.—There have been very many for whom the cosmos has been not only good but holy, an icon and a sacrament, the self-manifestation of immaterial Glory and a means of return to God at least as important in practical religion as the observances of the Church.—Many English Churchmen since the Reformation, in particular, have felt themselves to be members of the cosmos quite as much as the Church"[65].

A remarkable piece of analysis indeed. And in the last part in particular[66] typically Anglican. It is certainly not a feature of Dutch

[65] A. H. Armstrong, "Man in the Cosmos. A study of some differences between pagan Neoplatonism and Christianity". In: *Romanitas et Christianitas*, ed. W. den Boer, P. G. van der Nat e.a (Studia J. H. Waszink oblata), Amsterdam 1973, 5-14.

[66] Armstrong, p. 12 of the above-cited article.

Calvinism, so vigorous a branch of the great tree of Christianity, to feel a member of the cosmos quite as much as "the Church"; but not of Roman Catholicism either. Nor is it to be found with German Lutherans. These were certainly quite anthropocentrically minded..... Yet, not in the way Armstrong depicts it. What we miss in his description of Church-Christianity is: *the belief in the doctrine of creation* and its profound significance, both for the Christians of the Reformation and for Roman Catholics. The belief in one God, Creator of the heavens and the earth, the first article of the Christian Creed, was and is certainly not a dead and meaningless belief.

Armstrong thinks that Christian thought laid a strong emphasis on "the unbridgeable gulf between the Creator and His Creation." That insistence, so he thinks, makes the relationship of archetype and image much less intimate than it is in pagan Platonism, even though Christian theologians admitted the doctrine that the Ideas in the mind of God are the archetypes of the created world[67]. My question is: what does the belief in God the Creator mean to Christians? What did it mean to the Jews? It is expressed in the unceasing praise of God in the Psalms. "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Ps. 19.1)[68].

Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria Tua.

These words are daily said or sung in holy Mass. It is the prayer of the Church. Is it an idle sound? I do not think so. On the contrary. These words fill the hearts of Christian believers and direct their thoughts. The Church taught these Christians not to turn away from the sight of heavens and earth, but to look at them with admiring gratitude. If they came from Plato and Platonism, if they learned there to turn away from things visible, here they learn to enjoy the beauty and greatness of the heavens and the earth, and say or sing their praise to their Creator. Surely He is far above all His works. But there is not an unbridgeable gulf. Christians are aware of the fact that He holds all things in His hands. And is not that enough? I think it is.

It might be, after all, that Armstrong's presentation of Neoplatonism as a doctrine of theophany in the cosmos is rather a fruit of later development than a rendering of Plotinus' thought, at least in its prevailing tenor. So it seems to me. We could enlarge on this. But let these few words be enough[69].

[67] Armstrong, *o.c.*, p. 9.
[68] See also Ps. 50.6; 97.6; 148.
[69] The term "theophany" is neither used by Plotinus nor by Iamblichus or Proclus. As to its contents, in so far as the term suggests that "God" (taken in the absolute sense) is *directly* present or "appears" now and then in the visible world, we must say that Plotinus clearly did not teach that. Proclus held that by the Divinity divine forces are laid down in visible things, which is indeed a kind of sacramentalism. Probably Iamblichus held this, too. In this it should be remembered that Iamblichus was the court-philosopher and theologian of the Emperor Julian, and that both he and Proclus consciously and expressly tried to elaborate a religious world-view, which was meant to be a solid pagan counterpart to Christianity.

However this may be, it is rather an amusing paradox that in a time in which Christian theologians think they have to de-hellenize Christianity to make it more open to the world, a well-known specialist of late Platonism comes to tell us that the religious attitude towards the cosmos was an essential and even dominating feature of just that late Greek thought.

Let me conclude by simply stating this interesting paradox —interesting, even though not quite convincing to me.

2. *A note on Plato's so-called "cosmic dualism" and on the visible world as an image of the eternal Glory.*

Precisely ten years after my final lecture to the University Utrecht had been held, in January 1984, Prof. A. H. Armstrong, who had been my guest at the same university some 30 years earlier, spoke during a "Plotinus Day", organized at the Free University of Amsterdam, on the subject: "Dualism Platonic, Gnostic, and Christian"[70]. The theme of the Amsterdam Symposium was: "Plotinus amid Gnostics and Christians"[71]. Armstrong's aim was to give precision and variety to some senses in which the term "dualism" can legitimately be used. He wishes to deal in particular with cosmic dualism, which sees the whole nature of things as constituted by the meeting and interaction of two opposite principles. Such a dualism of two principles need not have the character of a conflict-dualism of the Iranian type. The two principles may be conceived as working together in harmony, just as in Chinese philosophy, and expressed by the Yang-Yin symbol. It is this kind of cosmic dualism which is found at the end of the long tradition of Platonism in classical Antiquity, in Syrianus and Proclus. Armstrong considers it to be well described by Jean Trouillard in *La Mystagogie de Proclos* (Paris 1982), 247. He notices in particular how the two principles operate at every level of the Proclean universe, and both in a positive way, because the "dark Other" or the Infinite is the principle of life, fecundity and creative expansion, without which the self-diffusion of the Good through all the levels of multiplicity would not be possible.

[70] Prof. Armstrong spoke on the same subject at the VIth International Conference of the Internat. Soc. for Neoplatonic Studies held at the University of Oklahoma, March 1984. The theme proposed for the conference was: Neoplatonism and Gnosticism.
[71] The papers presented at the Symposium were published at the VU Press, Amsterdam 1984, ed. by D. T. Runia.

At the beginning of this Platonist tradition the early Pythagorean table of opposites had to be mentioned. In this double list the *péras* heads the "good" principles, the *ápeiron* the "bad" ones. None the less, it is hardly possible to take the *ápeiron* as the principle of evil, Armstrong observes, since just as much as the *péras*, it is needed for the constitution of a cosmos. From *péras* and *ápeiron* Number comes forth, and for the Pythagoreans Number was the very essence of things.

The same remark applies to the principles of One and the Indefinite Dyad which, as Aristotle reports, were assumed by Plato as the ultimate principles of all things: if, indeed, the Dyad was considered as a necessary element for the generation of Numbers and Forms, then we would be wrong to qualify this thinking-form as a dualism of two conflicting principles.

All this is, I think, quite sensible and correct. It is regrettable that in his account of what he calls "the great myth of the *Timaeus*" Armstrong is rather seriously mistaken when he describes the genesis of the material universe as resulting from the encounter of two independent principles or powers: the Craftsman looking to his Paradigm, and the *Khora* or recipient which is really "dark" and responsible for all the failings and imperfections of the sensible world. Armstrong even goes so far as to speak of the Craftsman as "working on his awkward and recalcitrant material". It is certainly true that "the Craftsman" or Divine intelligence overcomes the element of irrational necessity which works in the visible world not by violence but by persuasion. And Armstrong is quite right in laying great emphasis on this aspect of Plato's account. In two respects, however, his rendering departs from Plato's description: (1) Plato does not speak of an encounter of "two independent principles or powers", the Demiurge and the *Khora* or receptacle. And how could he? He described the *Khora* as a third principle to be assumed in order to explain *genesis*. It is, so he says, a difficult thing to describe in words (49a) or to understand with the intellect; yes, it is "hardly believable" (μόγις πιστόν, 52b). You see it as in a dream.

(2) The *Khora* is the place in which things come to be. How does this happen? "Images" of the real things (μιμήματα τῶν ὄντων, 50c) go in and out in it and from it, leaving imprints on it as on a plastic stuff which—it is emphatically stated—has no form or substance of itself. What the Demiurge encounters, therefore, are: irregularly moving things, which bear only very vague traces of that which they have to become. This then is the material in which the Demiurge has to create form and measure, thus making a good and well-ordered world. There is no indication whatsoever of a "recalcitrant" matter; nor could there be, since "matter" in Plato is not provided with any form or active power. In Aristotle it has: his description of ὕλη includes a certain power of "striving" and of resistance[72], but this is lacking in Plato[73].

Now certainly in the physical world of Plato there is not just one causal Power at work, the intelligent Power of Reason, represented by the Demiurge. There is also an element of brute force, called ἀνάγκη. However, the power of Reason prevails: the Demiurge knows how to handle the non-rational force: he subdues it by the power of persuasion, compelling it to cooperate in harmony. Armstrong has brought this out very well. But we must decline his suggestion of a two principles-doctrine in physics, in the sense of some kind of dualism of "God" and "Matter". It is true that this idea generally haunted the minds of early Christian writers, who from Theophilus on credited Plato with the doctrine of a "*materia coaeterna Deo*". In fact, this is a rather misleading formula.

However, the question may be raised, where that mechanistic power of ἀνάγκη working in the created world can have come from; where else but from that third principle, the *Khora*? To this question, I think, we might best reply by saying, first, that Plato does not offer an explanation; next, that it is certainly in line with his metaphysical thinking to admit that on the level of physical existence as well as in the realm of noetic Being the principle of *ápeiron* works, together with the principle of *péras*. So there is indeed in his metaphysical thought a certain kind of two-principles doctrine which might be called a dualism, though neither of the conflict-kind nor of the kind of a "recalcitrant" Matter, *coaeterna Deo*. Moreover, it has to be remembered that the Divine Intellect, symbolized by the Demiurge, did not in Plato's metaphysics occupy the place of a First and Absolute Principle. Plato did assume such a principle, but under a perfectly abstract form.

In the later forms of Platonism this First and Ultimate Principle was almost generally recognized and maintained as such. So it was, of course, by Plotinus, in whose philosophy the One and the noetic world kept a strictly transcendent character with regard to the sensible world. And so it was still with the later Athenian Platonists, Syrianus and Proclus. For them too the two principles working in the cosmos correspond with the *péras*- and *ápeiron*-principles that work at the level of noetic Being, but they do not come up to the top. The One is for them the First

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[72] Arist., *Phys.* II 2,194b8-9 (matter a correlative of form); *De gener. anim.* IV 4,770b9-17 (matter may offer resistance to Form).

[73] The difference between ὕλη in Aristotle and that which is called the material principle in the *Timaeus* has been brought out very well by Solmsen, *Aristotle's System of the Physical World*; a comparison with his predecessors (Cornell Univ., Ithaca, N.Y. 1960), 42-45. He took the subject up in a recent lecture (1977), cited *infra*, Ch. VI, the end.

and Absolute, not participable, not having anything beside it. The primal Indefinite, comes "after" it, "after" in the logical and ontological sense. That is why we have good grounds to state (1) that Neoplatonism up to Proclus was essentially a *monistic* system of metaphysics; (2) that it has always been, and remained throughout its classical or ancient forms, a form of "transcendentalism", i.e. a system of metaphysics in which the complete transcendency of the First Principle was clearly and emphatically safeguarded. As for noetic Being, this too was a form of transcendental Being, in contradistinction to the sensible world.

When dealing with the beliefs of non-Gnostic Christians concerning creation and its imperfections, Armstrong states a strong and deep Platonic influence on Christian thinking, in so far as the later Platonic doctrine of the non-substantiality of evil has been accepted in classical Christian theology. He then makes a rather surprising statement, declaring that, in the West as well as in the East, Christians have often arrived at "a theophania view of the material creation, in which it appears as the God-made icon of the eternal glory".

A continental European Christian, whether of a Calvinistic, Lutheran or Roman Catholic stamp, must be rather startled at this piece of information. He will ask himself where in the world—in East and West—are or have been those "very many" who according to Armstrong's presentation looked at the visible world as a "theophany", that is, as a direct appearance or manifestation of God. Is that an early, or comparatively early Christian way of faith, taken up or preserved in the Anglican Church? We may remember the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix. This was indeed an early example in the West of a man who found in the view of the cosmic order a proof of divine Providence. It is only equalled, in the West again, at the end of Antiquity, on the edge of the Middle Ages, by that famous product of Antiquity at its final stage, Boethius' *Consolatio*, written in prison,—both of them works that were for many centuries read and enjoyed by Christian readers as testimonies of belief,—though in our view they might seem astonishingly deficient.

Armstrong refers, indeed, to an English Christian tradition "which saw no fundamental difference between Platonism and Christianity". Grown up in this spiritual climate, so he says, he came to accept God's self-revelation in nature as equal in honour to His self-revelation in Scripture and Church. He finds this way of faith admirably summed up in Maximus Confessor, who concludes a discussion on the interpretation of the white garments of the Transfiguration[74] saying: .... "the two laws,

[74] Mt. 17.1-3; see also Luc. 9.28-31.

of nature and of Scripture, are equal in honour, and teach the same as each other, and neither is greater or less than the other"[75]. Armstrong concludes this astonishing quotation by saying: "But there are of course important differences between the normal Christian creationist position and that of the later Platonists. The Christians lay much greater stress on God's will and have a more unbridled and absolute conception of divine creative power than Plato and his followers".

A few questions may be allowed here. The first might concern the usage of the term "theophania" (after the Greek θεοφάνεια), which in Antiquity was not used in this sense; and the second and more urgent one has to refer to the cited words of Maximus Confessor and inquire about their meaning.

In the early centuries of Christianity the term "theophania" for self-revelation of God does not occur. Τὰ θεοφάνια is used from the 3rd cent. on (Hippolytus) for the feast of the baptism of Christ, celebrated on January 6, as it still is in the Greek Church, and with the same ceremonies; somewhat later and less frequently also for Christmas, "the birthday of humanity", as it is said by Basilius of Cesarea[76]. Maximus Confessor probably knew the word θεοφάνεια. But what did it mean for him? Did he really speak of the visible world as a "theophania", comparable to, and even equal "in honour" to the self-revelation of God in history, and testified by Scripture and the Church? This seems hardly believable.

Let Scotus Eriugena give the reply to our query by explaining what he and what Maximus meant by the term "theophania". Scotus uses the term repeatedly. He explains it in the First Book of *De divisione naturae*, ch. 7-9. God's essence is unknowable for creatures. The causes of created things, as they exist in God, cannot be known by any creature either. In the intellect of the angels, however, certain *divine appearances* are given—*theophaniae quaedam*—of the intelligible grounds of things, that is, their main exemplary Forms (*principalia exempla*). This way in which God shows Himself in a sense to spiritual and rational creatures, is referred to in Scripture as "God". The Greeks speak in this case of *theophania*. It is not God's essence, but something *made by Him*, what is perceived by men (I 7).

The student[77] repeats summarizing: It is not the very causes of things which exist in God-Himself, that the angels have seen, but some divine

[75] The reference is to *Ambigua* 6, P.Gr. 91.1128 CD, with the preceding section AB.
[76] Basilius, P.Gr. 31,1473A: τὴν γενέθλιον ἡμέραν τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος. For γενέθλια also Greg.Naz., or.38, P.GR. 36,313C.
[77] Eriugena presents his arguments in the form of a dialogue between a master and a student, indicated by the letters M (magister) and D (discipulus).

appearances, which the Greeks call "theophaniae". And the Master concludes: We too shall not see God Himself, but certain divine appearances, made by Him in our minds (I 8).

He then quotes Maximus Confessor in his account of the Sermons of St. Gregory Nazianzen. Theophania, so he says, is exclusively worked by God; "it occurs, however, by virtue of the condescension of the Divine Word, that is, the only-begotten Son who is the Wisdom of the Father, as it were turned downward to the human nature, created and purified by Him, and by an elevation of human nature to the Divine Word through the love of God. By condescension I mean here not only that which was made in the Incarnation, but in particular that which takes place by the elevation of the creature to God ("per deificationem creaturae")[78]. By God's condescension then to human nature through grace, and by the elevation of that nature to Wisdom-itself through love, in this way theophania takes places".

He then quotes Augustine, who explains the Apostle's word "Who is made for us justice and wisdom", saying: "The Wisdom of the Father, in whom and through whom all things were made, who is non-created but creating, *He* comes in our souls, by some ineffable condescension of his graceful love, and conjoins our intellect with Himself". In the measure in which the human intellect is lifted up through love, in the same measure divine Wisdom descends through grace. And this is for man the cause of all virtue and power. This then is "theophania": it takes its beginning in this life, and is perfected in the life hereafter; it is something of the inner and spiritual life, and comes from God (I 9).

So far Eriugena. We ask: What was "theophania" for Maximus? Not the visible world. "Theophania" is for him an inward vision; it is the intelligible essence or Form of created things, which we can "see" within our own mind, because the Word of God has condescended to dwell in human souls. This is, in fact, what Augustine meant by "consulting the Magister interior"[79]. Scotus goes on quoting Maximus (I 10), who enlarges on the "adjunction" of human nature to God and on the "participation of Divinity" bestowed on man.

When we now take up the Greek text of Maximus and try to read the passage of the *Ambigua* referred to by Armstrong[80] as a testimony to the

[78] The notion of *deificatio creaturae* is not particularly Byzantine: it goes back to Irenaeus and is quite essential to Athanasius. Though the latter belonged to the Eastern part of the Mediterranean world, he can hardly be called a Byzantine. It is true that Gregory of Nyssa spoke much of 'deification', and that through him and Euagrius of Pontus the idea came to Maximus Confessor. But it was likewise familiar to Boethius, whose *Consolatio* was a book precious in the eyes of the Latin Christian world.

[79] Aug., *De magistro* 11,38.

[80] See n. 75.

existence of two equal laws, the law of nature and the written law, we find that the passage is a difficult one. It presupposes a rather wide acquaintance with the author's works in order to be fully understood. The questions to be asked are: How did Maximus look at nature? How did he look at "the written law"? And how was that law, referred to as "Scripture", related to the fullness of God's revelation in Christ, of which we ourselves when we speak of "Scripture", never make abstraction? By further reading of Maximus—reading which requires a great amount of inner concentration—it will become clear to us, (1) that he looked at nature in a way quite different from that of post-Renaissance men, including present-day people who love nature and enjoy its beauty. (2) We shall also find that his attitude towards Scripture was quite different from that of post-Reformatian Christians, including present-day theologians. And lastly the quoted section of the *Ambigua* will become clear and perspicuous to us.

Here follows a brief account of Maximus' way of thinking. For a good understanding I must appeal to the reader's patience: not everything can by said at once.

Maximus speaks of "three laws", (1) the law of nature, (2) the written law, (3) the perfect law of Christ which is entirely spiritual; it completes the two preceding ones and *brings* them to perfection. He calls it "the law of grace"[81]. The two former laws are of a lower order; they are bound up with matter and belong to "the world". For they are meant to educate man and lead him upwards, from the visible things here to the invisible. In the celebration of the holy liturgy the distinction between the two levels is clearly marked: After the reading of the Gospel the catechumens are sent away and the doors are closed. This means that *the world is left behind* and the order of the Spirit has come. The Lord enters.

Some comments are needed. (a) The law of *nature*. In Maximus' explanation of what "*theophania*" is, quoted by Scotus Eriugena in *De div. nat.* I 9, we found that his was a highly spiritual attitude towards the visible world. In the invisible "forms" or essences of things he saw the traces of the Divine Majesty, manifesting itself to us through the Divine Word in our souls. This is expressed in such a passage as in the *Quaest. ad Thalassium* 51[82], which says that God has laid "seeds of truth" in all

[81] *Quaest. ad Thalassium* (henceforth referred to as *Qu.a.Th.*) 19 and 64; P.Gr. 90,308BC, 724C.

[82] P.Gr. 90,476C, 477A. The passage is quoted in German by H. U. von Balthasar, *Kosmische Liturgie. Das Weltbild Maximus' des Bekenners*, 2. Aufl., Einsiedeln 1961, 302, at the beginning of a chapter dealing with Maximus' contemplation of nature. The same author discusses the three laws in the preceding section of the same work, 288-302. It is a highly valuable thing that, after a systematic treatment of the whole of Maximus' thought, the author gives German translations of the *Mystagogy* and of the *Centuriae*, with

created things. Man has to seek for an insight in these spiritual principles of being, which also contain certain fundamental rules of life. This deeper insight in the hidden laws and principles of created things is for man an imperishable food of the mind[83]. In this way the Creator-Logos becomes for man his daily bread: he has the wonderful faculty of transforming sense-data into a spiritual cosmos[84]. And this way of contemplating the world may bring us to practise the rules implied in it—rules of temperance and order, of self-restraint and courage. This, then, is the way to God.

Maximus' vision of the "seeds of truth" in created things does not differ essentially from Augustine's doctrine of the Magister interior, nor is it alien to Athanasius' view of created things as bearing the imprint of an image of the Logos[85]. But Maximus expresses the same view in a highly personal way, not only by the images he uses—e.g. "visible things are God's visible garments" and "the world is a veiled revelation of God"—but most of all by his way of turning the contemplation into practice. In this sense nature was to him really a "law", no less so than the written law of Scripture.

(b) *The written law.* One cannot really say that for Maximus Scripture took a privileged place. On the contrary. He respects the written law as given by God and necessary for man to teach him the way to God. But he is rather embarrassed by it. "Scripture has many obscurities", so he says. Of course, one has not to take it literally: "The letter kills". But it must have a spiritual sense, and we must try to find that. The visible things, being God's garments, are a veiled revelation of the hidden One. So it is with Scripture. It does not at all speak a clear language. On the contrary, it is a veiled and confused voice[86]. The provisory character of "the written law" is emphatically posited.

Now we can take up the passage of *Ambig.* 6, in which the author expounds the symbolic meaning of the white garments.

> "First, they bear in themselves a symbol of the words of holy Writ; for then they have become clear and perspicuous, freed from all difficult riddles and symbolic shadow, showing the rational sense that was hidden in them, when they bring out the plain and true knowledge about God and are

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introductions and commentary. The only thing a classical philologist could wish is to have the Greek text at his disposal, for this is not so easy to get.

[83] *Qu.a.Th.* 39; P.Gr. 90,392B.

[84] *Ambig.*, P.Gr. 91,1248BC.

[85] Athanasius, *Or.c.Ar.* II 79.

[86] *Qu.a.Th.* 40; P.Gr. 90,396AB, 400A; *Ambig.* 91,1252CD. Von Balthasar, *o.c.*, p. 307, translates "eine verhüllte, verworrene Stimme, vergleichbar dem Rollen des Donners, die nichts Deutliches verlautet".

> liberated from the bonds with the world and the flesh. Or also do they bear a symbol of the creation itself, when the dirty superficial view of those who are deceived by its outward appearance and are slaves of the senses only, is raised[87], by means of a true insight in the multifarious forms of which it is full[88]. It is similar to a cloak which shows the bearer's dignity, the power of the creating Word[89]. The symbol applies to both cases, since both are veiled by obscurity. *For our sake* evidently[90], in order to prevent that *we* should dare touch unworthily what is inaccessible. It is present in the written word of Scripture as *the Word*, and in the created world as Creator and Maker. Therefore both of them are necessary to him who wishes to come faultless and directly to God, by a spiritual knowledge of Scripture, and by a contemplation of the physical world according to the Spirit".

Then follows the conclusion about the equality of the two laws.

This is how that difficult Byzantine text reads. I rendered it as precisely as possible. Now let us conclude.

It proved to be misleading for modern ears that Maximus spoke of two laws of equal dignity, as if these two stood by themselves and, at least together, comprehended the whole of Christian revelation. This is not what Maximus had in mind. When speaking of "the written law", also referred to as "Scripture", the New Testament was not included. And this changes the whole picture. It presupposes a view of the Old Testament which is very different from that of post-Reformatian Christianity, and in particular from that of present-day theology. One cannot say that Maximus had a clear view of God's work in history, recorded both in the Old and in the New Testament. What is strange to us, is that he hardly seems to have read the books of Moses as "Heilsgeschichte", organically linked with the New Testament. For him it was "the written law", which contained many "obscurities", that is to say, many things which are morally far below the level of Christ's teaching, and even offending to our moral sense, if we take them as they are there. It is certainly not a

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[87] In spite of the preceding explanations the close translation of Maximus must be extremely hard to digest for those readers who are used to philosophical argument in the style of today: we strive for precision of expression, while he, in our view at least, displays an almost shocking lack of precision. Here follows an attempt to offer some help to these present-day readers.

(1) 'They', that is, the white garments, bear a symbol of the creation.

(2) when 'the dirty superficial view' ... is 'raised': when the superficial way in which most people look at the world ('nature') is 'lifted' ('raised' to a higher level).

[88] 'of which it is full'—'it', that is, the visible world.

[89] 'It', that is, the visible world, is similar to a cloak which shows the bearer's dignity. And this dignity is twofold; for 'the power of the creating Word' (the *Logos*) stretches not only to the visible world ('creation'), but to 'the written law' as well. That is then worked out in the following sentence.

[90] 'For our sake' is a much-used formula in Athanasius' *Logoi against the Arians*: All those texts in Scripture, which apply to Christ in his state of humiliation are written 'for our sake'. Basic texts: *Or.c.Ar.* I 13, I 41, II 12f., III 34, III 37ff., 42f., 53f.

matter of chance that for him *Moses* was the dominating figure, not Abraham, the father of believers. To him Abraham with his two wives was certainly not a model of Christian virtue. To be sure, we have to understand the story spiritually. But apparently this meant to him, and to many of his contemporaries and companions, that the "dirty" story of the Patriarchs had vanished completely. We have to remember that even at the Council of Trent it was not "the Bible", as we call it, that was placed at the centre of attention, but the New Testament, and it is a relatively recent development that in the Roman Catholic Church the laity read and study the Old Testament as the record of the work of God in history.

If we understand Scripture in this sense, however, it is no longer possible to see God's "veiled" appearance in nature, however real and imposing it may be, as equal to, and of the same order as, the work of God in history, which is the history of His personal concern with those who were his chosen people. Nature testifies to God's grandeur, certainly. But it speaks of God in a different way, more from a distance.

My question then is: How has it come about that in (part of) the Anglican tradition the two laws of Maximus Confessor were, and perhaps still are, considered to be of equal value for Christian faith, and this while "Scripture" is taken to embrace the whole of both Testaments?

I think we need go back neither to Maximus Confessor nor to Scotus Eriugena. We rather have to fix our attention on the 16th and early 17th centuries: In the days of Galileo and Kepler a wave of passionate interest in the structure of the universe swept over Western Europe, and the search for the secrets of Nature was seen as a challenge. In those days the visible world appeared to be a manifestation of the Divine, a *Theophany*, to be both admired in the context of religion and investigated by the inquiring intellect. Revelation and Scripture were regarded as the concern of theologians. But the presence of God in the cosmos seemed to the thinkers of that age as great and mighty, and equally worthy of our concern. We have to remember the tragic figure of Giordano Bruno, and the Silesian shoemaker Jakob Böhme, who in the Preface to his "Aurora" (1610) presented a kind of Christian Neoplatonism, in which the One appears as the Source of life, the absolute Beauty of the Intelligible as the archetype of the universe, and God as the original Light and Spirit.

In the second half of the 17th century the Cambridge theologian and philosopher Ralph Cudworth published his work *The intellectual system of the Universe* (London 1678), erected as a spiritual counterpart to Hobbes' theory that "real things" are bodies[91]. As a good follower of Proclus and

[91] Expounded in the work *De corpore*, London 1655.

inspired by Renaissance Platonism, Cudworth argued that behind every whole, whether of physical or of celestial bodies, including the universe as a whole, there is a creative and spiritual principle. Similar ideas were taught by his contemporary Henry More. In England this 17th-century Neoplatonic philosophy had a far-reaching influence. No doubt we have here the origin of that English Christian tradition to which A. H. Armstrong is referring, when he speaks of the "theophanic view" of the world in the minds of "very many" post-Reformatian Christians.

With reference to the problem of the relationship of on the one hand Maximus Confessor and Scotus Eriugena, and on the other hand Renaissance and post-Renaissance thought, the following points can be made.

(a) The idea of the world as a theophany, in contrast to the Church theology of God's full revelation in Christ has its roots in the late Renaissance.

(b) There is no direct line either from Maximus Confessor or from Scotus Eriugena to Renaissance and post-Renaissance Platonism. The 7th- and 9th-century authors differ essentially from the late-Renaissance men.

(c) The Platonism of the Italian Renaissance in the period preceding the 16th- and 17th-centuries was studied by Nesca Robb. She noticed the difference. Her conclusion runs as follows[92]:

> "The Renaissance, without being the reversion to paganism that it has sometimes been called, had in the main lost touch with the mysticism of a Dionysius or an Origen. Some of its writers evolved a pantheistic mysticism of their own, but the variety and excitement of immediate human concerns were generally so powerful as to exclude any impulse towards "the flight of the alone to the Alone". Consequently much of the talk of heavenly love and ideal beauty rings false".

In contradistinction to that earlier period it must be noticed that with a Giordano Bruno and a Jacob Böhme the distance not only from Origen and Dionysius the Areopagite, but also from Maximus Confessor and Scotus Eriugena is manifest, precisely in the awareness of the presence of the Divine in Nature, and in the evaluation of that presence with regard to Scripture and Church.

[92] Nesca A. Robb, *Neoplatonism of the Italian Renaissance*, London 1935, 270.

PART TWO

THE DOCTRINES

CHAPTER SIX

WAS PLATO A DUALIST? *

There are four grounds on which Plato is usually qualified as a dualist: (1) his position in metaphysics, usually referred to as the two worlds theory; (2) his radical antithesis of soul and body, as it is commonly understood; (3) the doctrine of two ultimate principles, which he appears to have held at least in his later years; (4) the so-called cosmic dualism, attributed to him by early Christian writers and still ascribed to him by some present-day scholars.

A Platonist's contribution to this fourfold theme of discussion must be to give a correct account of Plato's thought, explaining on texts what he really held in each of these fields. The Platonist has to answer the questions and misunderstandings that have arisen and are rather generally spread. He has to do so, avoiding any transformation of Plato which would tend to adapt him to some particular trend in present day thought.

This is not to deny that the philosopher Plato has a word for present-day philosophers. I do believe he has. But the first thing is to clear the ground and see what we are really talking about when we speak of Plato's dualism.

In 1972 I found grounds to undertake the task of giving such an account. There was indeed a lot of talk about Plato's dualism at that time, both in theology and in anthropology. Theologians were concerned with the study both of Scripture and of the history of Church and dogma. Many of them found in Greek philosophical thought, and in particular in Platonism with its dualistic tendencies, the main cause of the fact that during the first four or five centuries Christianity developed from quite simple and unphilosophical beginnings into an ecclesiastical system with a set of precisely formulated doctrines. In principle these theologians and historians went back to Harnack, that great German scholar, who in his *Dogmengeschichte*[1] defined "dogma" as the product of the working of the Greek mind on the Jewish gospel[2].

Up to a certain extent this cannot be denied. What remains an open question is, whether or not the development that has taken place is a

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* The greater part of this chapter was published in *Thêta-Pi*, vol. I 1, Leiden 1972. This is a revised edition, preceded by a new introduction and supplemented in sofar as needed.

[1] Adolf von Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, erster Band, *Die Entstehung des kirchlichen Dogmas*. First edition 1885, 4th ed. 1909. Reprod. Darmstadt 1964.

[2] *O.c.*, p. 53.

"true" or legitimate development. Harnack thought it a deviation from the Founder's mind and therefore a perversion[3], and many present day theologians think in the same way. On the other hand, the 19th-century cardinal John Henry Newman, reflecting on the fact of the development, came to the conclusion that it must be a "true" and legitimate development. He constructed an elaborate theory, in which a number of criteria of true development are set forth, provided with ample historical material[4].

In our day, the Harnack view has a strong grip on the minds of theologians, both of reformatorian and of Roman Catholic confession. Since 1972 there has been a lively discussion on the subject, a discussion in which I repeatedly took part[5]. At present, that is, ten or twelve years after my account of Plato's dualism, the discussion has by no means set-

[3] Reading Harnack is always fascinating. One is perpetually confronted with the Greek sources all over that vast Mediterranean world of the Roman Empire. Harnack knew that world with an admirable precision, and he analysed it keenly. In doing so he anticipated a considerable number of later studies of details, and in so far as there is some new material, either in the field of gnosis or in that of political and social history, his insight is often confirmed. On the other hand, his judgement on the value of the analysed facts is singularly biassed: he passionately rejected the whole ecclesiastical structure.

[4] John Henry Cardinal Newman, *An essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. First published by the Anglican Newman, with an "advertisement" written at Littlemore, October 6, 1845. A new edition appeared in 1878. The 17th impression of this edition, published at Longmans, Green & Co., N. York-London 1927, is in my personal library. The seven "Notes of genuine Developments contrasted with Corruptions" are summed up in Part II, ch. V, and worked out in the chapters VI-XII.

[5] Chiefly in the greater work *De grondslag van onze zekerheid. Over de problemen van de Kerk heden*, 1977 ("The Foundation of our certitude. On the problems of the Church today"). Ch. IV of this book deals with the *philologico-historical method* as the right method for the study of the New Testament—as of any ancient text. I observed that "our" Erasmus (as the humanists called him), who first applied the method to the Greek text, was in a better position to explain the N.T. than the nineteenth-century interpreters, who claimed to exercise "critical" exegesis but started from some metaphysical bias. I illustrated the impact of the 19th-cent. German "critical" School, together with that of Ernest Renan (as good a scholar of the spiritual and religious movements of late Antiquity as in a following generation Harnack was, though of a very different mind), on higher intellectual circles of the English clergy by referring to Humphrey Ward's novel *Robert Elsmere* (1888). The novel describes the inner conflicts of an English clergyman with "scholarly inspirations" in the eighties of the 19th century.

It is a first rate historical document. I also mentioned the older School of history of religion which, as much as the famous David Friedrich Strauss, lives a kind of renewed life in the present days.

My "Reflections on Philipp. 23-24" in *Novum Testamentum* (1977) touches on anthropology; the essay "Problems on Justin Martyr" in *Mnem.* (1978) on the continuity and discontinuity between Greek philosophy and Christian faith, and that on "De opname van het filosofische Godsbegrip als dogmatisch probleem der vroeg-Christelijke theologie" in *Kerk en theologie* (1979) (French version in *Scripta Theologica* of Pamplona, 1979) on Platonic metaphysics as a generally accepted part of Christian thinking in the early centuries of Christianity. Other papers with a bearing on Greek philosophy and Christian thinking have appeared in the years from 1980 up till now.

tled down. It rather seems that the fruits of what was sown in the 19th-century[6] will ripen only after the twentieth. For the time being, some more clearness might be reached by a precise knowledge of what Plato actually held.

This applies to anthropology as well. Modern anthropology as a philosophical discipline makes its stand against Descartes, whose view of man as "the ghost in the machine"[7] is usually seen as a new form of Plato's doctrine. Against it, man is now taken to be a substantial unity, not so much a "composite" of body and soul, as it was conceived by Aristotle—who left *noûs* out of the *syntheton* (!)—but rather a unity in such a way that there is no soul which could be distinguished in any sense from the body. This doctrine is put before us nowadays. Plato has his word to say to it.

As for present-day philosophy, it shows the tendency to eliminate the existence of a "transcendent" reality, in so far as this is meant to be a reality, existing "somewhere beyond" the world in which we live: There is one reality only, this one here and now. Certainly, it can be analysed into its intelligible forms, and this may be called a metaphysic of immanency.

I have considered these problems repeatedly in the preceding chapters, and from different parts. Though they stand perpetually in the background of my work, it is not my intention to take them up in this chapter in some direct form. What I *do* want is to give to our philosophers a correct view of what Plato held, and thus, by means of a true picture, contribute something to prevent misunderstandings and clear the way to a true metaphysic.

I. *Reality and knowledge*

I set out by examining the matter of the two-worlds theory. The theme brings us right into the heart of Plato's philosophy, as it is expounded in the *Phaedo* and in the central books of the *Republic*. It is also clearly present in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*. If by the term "two worlds" is meant: two kinds of reality, then the existence of two worlds is explicitly posited in *Phaedo* 79a[8]. Plato's ontology and metaphysics, his theory of

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man ("anthropology") and of human knowledge, all of them are present in this passage. (1) The "two worlds" are posited as "two kinds of being": δύο εἴδη τῶν ὄντων. (2) They are described as "on the one hand the visible, on the other the invisible"—τὸ μὲν ὁρατόν, τὸ δὲ ἀειδές—the latter of which is said to be always the same, while the former is ever changing. (3) Next, "we ourselves" are introduced. We, too, prove to be twofold: there is in us on the one hand the body, on the other hand the soul. They are different: the former is more like the visible, the latter more like the invisible part of Reality. (4) Next follows the problem of knowledge: when in practising its intellectual activity the soul makes use of the body, it is confused and falls into error; when considering things by itself, it will attain to "pure and eternal being"—"eternal", i.e. ἀεὶ ὂν καὶ ἀθάνατον—which is always the same. Thus it comes to certitude and is freed from error. (5) This state of the mind—he says: "of the soul"—is called φρόνησις. (6) The ontology implied in this passage clearly comprises a part of metaphysics: physical being is introduced as a part of Reality ("being"), but neither the only nor the best part of Reality. The other part is found to be "pure", ever-existing and always the same. Thus, a distinction has been introduced which implies a difference of value and, so to speak, a difference of level: that kind of being which is "pure" is obviously "better" than the other kind; that which "always exists" is superior to that which passes away, the "immortal" kind is superior to the perishable, the "stable" kind as such more basic than the shifting. We are in full metaphysics here: physical being is a kind of reality, but a kind of reality which can neither exist by itself nor be known or explained from itself. It is found to be dependent on that other, superior kind of being. There proves to be a "difference of level" in such a sense that, after all, there appear to be *not two realities*, the one next to or opposite the other, realities of basically the same order and thus independent the one of the other—which would be *dualism*—, but one kind of reality which symbolically should be indicated by a capital, a Reality which in the ontological order must be called "basic", and in the qualitative order "supreme", a Reality which does not surpass the other in degree, in the way we say of things surrounding us that one of them is "superior" to another, but ἁπλῶς; and another kind of reality which does "exist", but in its very existence is found to be dependent on the first.

That this metaphysical way of thinking is in fact what Plato's Socrates had in mind, will be clearly seen in those pages of the same dialogue in which Socrates tells the story of his own intellectual life:[9] he speaks about

[9] *Phaedo* 96a-100e; De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* I, nos. 216 and 266a-c.

his keen interest in the philosophy of Nature in his younger years. "For that seemed a wonderful kind of wisdom to me, to know the causes of everything, by what each thing comes into being, by what it perishes, and by what it exists". He mentions the usual way of inquiring into the grounds of physical existence, his dissatisfaction about the answers given by the older philosophers, from the Milesians up to the fifth-century physicists, including Anaxagoras, and at the end he speaks of his δεύτερος πλοῦς. By this expression he means that he "had recourse to λόγοι" in order to find the true grounds why things in nature are such as they are, and why they exist at all. E.g., to the question of "Why is a thing, whatever it is, beautiful?" the only satisfactory reply that can be given is: "Because it takes part in the Beautiful-itself, which in some way or other is present to it".

Now this "Beautiful-itself", Good, Great etc. is emphatically posited as "existing"[10],—not "existing" on the same level as the things partaking in it but of a different order. It is the difference between "being" in the full and perfect sense which Plato often called "true reality" (ὄντως ὄν or ἀλήθεια) and, on the other hand, "being" in an imperfect and only partial sense.

"*Partial* being"—so it appears to be in that remarkable passage of *Rep.* V[11] where Plato's Socrates argues that the object of that lower form of cognition which is not concerned with the full "being" of "things themselves" but is a "view" of things presenting themselves to our senses, none the less is always *something.* Now "something" could not be perceived if it were not existing,—just "non-being" (μὴ ὄν). It *must* have a share of "being" in it, though it is not "being" in the full and total sense. It must be a mixture of "being" and "non-being", a middle thing or μεταξύ.

Thus Plato who repeatedly denies "being" to the world of human experience, which are "things becoming" (γιγνόμενα), obviously did not do so to deny any kind of existence to them. Again and again we shall find in Plato's dialogues the same metaphysical approach as in the "two worlds" passage of the *Phaedo*, the same kind of ontology, though not always expressed in the same terms. The means by which he expresses himself are different, the underlying thought is the same. Other dialogues of the middle period of Plato's work will deal more elaborately with those problems of Being, of Man and of Knowledge, which we found outlined in the *Phaedo*; they will add precisions, but they will not be found to be essentially at variance with our first-cited passage. They may

[10] *Phaedo* 100b5; see De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* I, under 266b (comments) and c (text).
[11] 478a-e.

be cited by way of illustration. Let us examine the texts and see what they teach us concerning the two kinds of reality.

The most elaborate treatment by Plato's Socrates is found in the central books of the *Republic*, from the last pages of book V, in which he tries to explain what the true philosopher will be like[12], up to the explanation of the parable of the cave and the conclusions drawn from it with regard to education[13].

To the question of "Who do you call the true philosophers"? Plato's Socrates replies: "Those who like to look at true Reality".—It would be misleading to render the text—τοὺς τῆς ἀληθείας φιλοθεάμονας[14]—by "Those who love to contemplate the truth". To modern ears the term "truth" has a different ring from Greek ἀλήθεια in Plato, who wrote in the *Symposium* that a person who "is beholding" the Beautiful itself and lives in contact with it—the Greek speaks of τοῦ θεωμένου καὶ ξυνόντος—must have a life of the highest value "because he is looking in that direction" (ἐκεῖσε βλέποντος), and cannot but bring forth fruits of true virtue "because he is in touch with *the True*" (ἅτε τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἐφαπτομένῳ)[15].

"The True", if we have to comment on it, might be explained by: "authentic reality", which is, Platonically speaking, Reality-itself (αὐτὸ τὸ ὄν or τὸ ὄντως ὄν). We may call it *primary Being*, since visible things depend on it in their existence. But here I am anticipating *Rep*. VI. At this stage of my argument I have first to refer to the passage which immediately preceded the above-cited definition of the philosopher which I translated by "Those who like to look at true Reality".

I consciously avoided the term "to contemplate". The Greek verb θεᾶσθαι is primarily used for "seeing" or "looking at" something. Thus in the preceding lines Glaucon spoke of a large number of people who are φιλοθεάμονες and φιλήκοοι. He was thinking of those who rush to all theatre performances occurring, either in the town or in its surroundings[16]. In the following pages[17] these people "who like to hear and see fine voices, fine colours, fine forms and everything that is with art made out of suchlike things" are opposed, as not-philosophers, to those who are able to "see" with their intellect that which is "the Beautiful-itself". Those who are able to see that are supposed to form just a small

[12] 474b-480a (which is the end of b.V), 484a-b (the opening page of VI, in which the φιλόσοφος is defined).
[13] VII 518d. The essential texts with reference to the problems of being and of knowledge are printed in my *Greek Phil.* I, the nos. 289-297.
[14] 475e5.
[15] *Symp.* 211e-212a; De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* 273.
[16] 475d-e.
[17] 476b-d; 479e-480a.

group. "Now the man who believes in the existence of lovely things, but not in the existence of Beauty-itself, and is not able to follow whenever another will try to direct him towards the knowledge of that Beauty, does he seem to you to live in a dream or rather in reality?"—Glaucon: "I should say that such a man lives rather in a dream."—Socr.: "And what about the man who is in the opposite state of mind, the man who does believe in Beauty-itself and is able to see it, without mistaking the things participating in it for Beauty-itself nor Beauty-itself for those things? Does he seem to you to live in reality, or rather in a dream?"—Glaucon: "Most certainly in reality."

This is very strong language indeed. Does it not suggest that "the many lovely things" do not actually exist, i.e. that they are *no reality*? That would imply that of the "two kinds of reality" posited in *Phaedo* 79a, one only turns out to be actually real. And is not that declaring that, after all, *the world of visible things is not real*?

Speaking Greek, that would be declaring visible things to be μὴ ὄντα. Now that is what Plato does not say. For in the following pages[18] he argues that the lower form of cognition which is not concerned with perfect being (τὸ παντελῶς ὄν, of which alone perfect knowledge is possible)[19] but with imperfect things, nevertheless has some definite object: δόξα, so he says, is always "having a view of *something*". It is just impossible to have a view of nothing. *Ergo*, "being" cannot be denied to that which is the object of "a view". Yet it is not full being: it must be *both being and non-being*, a kind of intermediate (μεταξύ) between non-being and pure being[20]. Plato is not unfaithful to the start made in the *Phaedo*: visible things are a kind of reality, but of a lower level than that which is full and primary Reality. It is subordinate to "pure Reality" since it depends on it. Again it is not dualism what we find in these pages of the *Republic*: the two kinds of reality which are clearly distinguished the one from the other are not conceived as equal poles. An ontological scheme of subordination can hardly be called a dualistic scheme.

Further explanations in books VI and VII will show us how the ontology of subordination is worked out. One thing of particular interest has to be noticed before we leave book V. It is the way of dealing with the state of mind of the man who only believes in the things he can see with his eyes.

[18] The passage on the object of δόξα runs from 476d up to 479e. I referred to it above (p. 7) when explaining the *Phaedo* passage.
[19] 477a: τὸ μὲν παντελῶς ὂν παντελῶς γνωστόν.
[20] In the conclusion, 479d, the same term is used as occurs so frequently in the *Phaedo*, denoting the 'invisible things': τὸ ὂν εἰλικρινῶς.

Such a man, it was said, does not seem to live in reality but rather in a dream; the other, who is able to see that Reality which can only be perceived by the thinking mind, appears to live not in a dream but most certainly in reality.—Here I made an interruption. Following the text in 476d we find Socrates suggesting that the man who lives in reality has real insight, while the other man has just ''a view'' of that which seems so to him. Glaucon willingly follows the suggestion. And Socrates goes on asking ''And what shall we do when he gets angry because of this statement and will quarrel with us saying that we are wrong? Shall we be able to win him over and persuade him gently, hiding from him that his mind is not sane?''

The question is revealing. This is for Plato the state of mind of the great majority of men: *their mind is not sane* ...

Book VI, opens with the following definition of the philosopher:

''Philosophers are those who are able to live in touch with that which is always the same.''

The author adds: ''The others, who are erring in the things that are many and have always changing forms, are no philosophers''[21].

He goes on discussing the political consequences of his thesis: the philosopher's duty of governing the city because he and he alone knows ''the truth'',—i.e. transcendent Reality—, and how it comes about that philosophers are actually not considered to be fit for that task. The problem of how to rear such kind of men leads from the basis—which was a long and intense training, equally of the body and of the mind—up to ''the most important and particularly suitable matter which such a man has to learn''[22].

Glaucon: ''Are not these things which we have been discussing here (about justice) the most important? Is there still anything more important than justice and what we discussed here?''

Socrates: ''Yes, there is something greater.''

What is it? What is the greatest thing a lover of wisdom has to learn? — It is about the supreme and ultimate Good.

In the pages 508c-509c, in which Socrates tries to answer Glaucon's question concerning the nature of the Good, we find again all those features known to us from the *Phaedo*, where the life of the philosopher was characterized by turning away from visible things because they bring the mind into confusion, and approaching the ''things-themselves'' which are ἀλήθεια (''true Reality'') by the mind alone. That was

[21] 484b; *Greek Phil.*, no. 289c.
[22] τὸ μέγιστον καὶ μάλιστα προσῆκον μάθημα, 504d3.

what Socrates told his friends on the last day of his life when, in prison, explaining to them what in his view the philosopher's life is like: it is a continual exercise in dying[23].

It is this frightfully ''dualist'' view of life which seems to run so obviously against the modern feeling of ''we love the world and wish to make it worth living in'', which we are making the object of a careful re-examination. We want to ''hear'' Plato before asking whether the predicate of dualism is rightly applied to his philosophy. So let us go on listening to him in his explanation about the Good[24].

''In darkness'', so he says, ''one's eyes cannot distinguish anything. They seem to be blind, as though no right capacity of seeing were in them. But as soon as the sun shines, they see quite clearly and prove to be able to perform their function well. With the mind it is likewise: as long as it is in the shadowy twilight of things becoming and passing away, it just can't come to the knowledge of that which fully ''is''; it seems confused and incapable of having any insight. But as soon as it has reached that firm and stable ground where *true Reality* shines—οὗ καταλάμπει ἀλήθειά τε καὶ τὸ ὄν (a kind of hendiadys)—it proves to be able to think and comes to know that which really is''.

—''So it seems''.—

—''Now that which supplies reality to the objects of knowledge and at the same time makes the knowing subject able to perform its function, that is the Idea of the Good. It is the cause both of Reality and of knowledge. It is their ground, and therefore, more beautiful and perfect than they. They are like it, they resemble it, but should not be confused with it. It transcends them just as in the visible world the sun is above the things it makes exist and grow, while at the same time it makes them visible for us.''

—''How do you mean that?''

—''Well, also the things that are known are knowable only by the Good, and at the same time the Good is for them the cause of their existence and of their very nature; and it is so while being itself beyond that order.''

In spite of Glaucon's urgent request Socrates says that he is not able to give an adequate explanation. But he will do his best.—What follows is the famous passage of the divided line. But let us first see how the above-cited passage on the Good is related to the two-world theory of *Phaedo* 79a.

(1) There is the same underlying conception of reality: two ''kinds'' of

[23] *Phaedo* 65a-67b.
[24] *Rep.* VI 508c-509c; De Vogel, *Greek Phil.*, 292.

reality, the visible and the invisible, the one of which is subordinated to the other.

(2) There is an analogy between the two kinds.

(3) The ultimate cause of the invisible order is said to be beyond that kind of reality. Primary Reality is said to be *like* its cause without being identical with it[25].

After the *Phaedo* passage the introduction of an ultimate ground of Reality is new. Our language is here necessarily somewhat confusing: if "Being" is translated by "Reality", the ultimate Ground is described as "transcending Reality". Yet, it is clearly meant to be more "real" than anything, and knowing about it—though Socrates emphatically declares to be unable to describe it more precisely—is clearly said to be the greatest thing a philosopher has to learn.

This is what runs throughout the whole passage, from VI 508e up to VII 517c, where the Good is explicitly declared to be the ultimate cause of *all* reality, visible as well as invisible.

Let us now consider the passage of the divided line[26]. First, there is a main division into two parts: "thinkable" (νοητόν) and "visible" (ὁρατόν). Next, there is a subdivision of each of these parts: the former is subdivided into "pure νοητά" (objects of "pure" thought) and mathematical objects (objects of a kind of thinking which makes use of visible schemes), the latter into natural things on the one hand and their shadows or reflected images on the other. The relation between the two parts is clear: natural objects are the "things-themselves", while their shadows or reflected images are a kind of imitation. These images are not just nothing, but their reality is of a secondary character. Thus, the whole section of visible things is a secondary kind of reality with reference to the objects of thinking.

Mathematical objects, too, are objects of thinking, and thus appear to have ontological priority to natural objects. Yet, they are secondary with

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[25] The distinction between ἐπιστήμη καὶ ἀλήθεια (intelligible Being and the knowledge of it) which in the field of νοητά are ἀγαθοειδῆ, i.e. *like* the Good, but are *not the Good itself*, just as in the visible world light and sight are *like* the sun but are not the sun itself,—this distinction is so clearly made in 508e-509a, that it is certainly not justified to infer from these lines that for Plato the Good itself was an intelligible object just as the other νοητά. I therefore suggested to take the words ὡς γιγνωσκομένης μέν in e4 not as referring to αἰτίαν, but to connect them with the immediately preceding ἀληθείας: *intelligible Being, though it is an object of knowledge* (and as such highly valuable), must be carefully distinguished from its Cause, which it resembles without being of the same kind. The text is discussed in ch. I of the present volume, p. 46.

[26] *Rep.* VI 509d-511c; De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* 294 (schemes at the bottom of pp. 202 and 203).

reference to the objects of *pure* thought which alone are called "true Reality" (ἀλήθεια)[27].

It is not a scheme of a double polarity which we have before us in these pages of Plato, it is an order of subordination. The simile of the cave only illustrates this.

The *eikoon*-character of the visible world is strongly emphasized in the *Timaeus*. The concept has two aspects: on the one hand it expresses the *secondary* character of the subject, on the other hand its resemblance to the original. A shifting of the accent must be noted: while in the *Phaedo* and the *Republic* the accent was definitely laid on the secondary character (which, no doubt, implies an inferiority to that which is primary), in the *Timaeus* the resemblance to the original (which implies order and beauty) is very strongly stressed[28]. There is no change in Plato's ontology or metaphysics; there is a change in his interest, hence, in his approach to the problems of reality in the widest sense. It might be characterized as follows. In the earlier dialogues the author was concerned with the upward striving of the mind: he tried to explain how the philosopher has to seek for transcendent Reality and its ultimate ground; in the later ones, including the *Timaeus*, he is fulfilling the task he imposed on philosophers in that very passage of the divided line[29], the task of "going down"[30] from the ultimate ground to that which depends on it. It is a sign of maturity that in the *Timaeus* he tackles the problem of the origin of the visible world, laying great stress on its beauty and order, and spends even the greater part of his discussion on the problem of *man-in-concreto*, which is the problem of how to cope with the condition of having to live in a body. In this part of that dialogue—which, metaphysically speaking, is as "dualist" as any of his writings, opening with the basic statement that, on the one hand, there is that which is always the same, which is "Being", and on the other hand that which is *becoming* and perishes again, and therefore never *IS*—in this part of the dialogue then, which runs from 41 up to the end, he is not particularly concerned with the philosopher and his attitude in life but with the problems of just ordinary people, who like everyone are liable to a large number of influences, not the least resulting from their physical condition.

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[27] Plato frequently uses the term ἀλήθεια, "authentic reality", e.g. *Phaedo* 65b, *Symp.* 212a, *Rep.* 508a-509a, 517c, *Phaedrus* 247c-d, 249b, *Theaet.* 186c-d. Also the term ὄντως ὄν, e.g. *Phaedr.* 247e.

[28] *Tim.* 29a-b, 37c-d.

[29] 511b.

[30] καταβαίνειν.

Man in the Timaeus

The curious thing is that in this part of the *Timaeus* Plato who is dealing here with man as a συναμφότερον, a "both-together", which means a compound of two heterogeneous parts, turns out to be much less of a spiritualist than Aristotle, who is usually opposed to Plato because of his highly praised doctrine of man as a **σύνθετον**, which is: natural unity of two inseparable parts that essentially belong together. Those who thus praise Aristotle seem to forget that for him the thinking mind (νοῦς) of man was not a part of the perishable compound of soul and body but, though for a life-time connected with it, in fact was "separate" and of a different nature. Even the passive intellect (νοῦς παθητικός) was conceived as ἀπαθής by Aristotle, which means that it could not be affected by the body. In Plato's *Timaeus*, however, though the thinking part of the soul, placed in the head, is separated from the lower parts as much as possible, there is intercommunion through the "isthmus" of the neck, and intercommunion in both directions: not only from the top to the lower parts, but also the other way round.

For Aristotle man is essentially not the σύνθετον; he is essentially that which is the best of him, by which he is above the animals and nearest to the Gods: his intellect (νοῦς). That is what Aristotle suggests in *Eth. Nic.* X 7[31]. Is it Plato, or is it rather Aristotle whom he follows when Cicero writes in the *Somnium Scipionis*:[32] "Tu vero enitere et sic habeto, non esse te mortalem sed corpus hoc. Nec enim tu is es quem forma ista declarat, sed *mens cuiusque is est quisque*, non ea figura quae digito demonstrari potest"?—According to the traditional view which makes Plato a spiritualist and a "dualist" while Aristotle is regarded as the master who first taught that man was essentially a unity composed by soul and body, one might guess that Plato is behind this passage. Yet, that would be an error. For the reader of that whole chapter of Cicero[33] will find himself completely in an astral climate, where the soul as a cause of motion is called *animus sempiternus*, because it is moving without end. This brings us so much into the sphere of Aristotle's Περὶ φιλοσοφίας III[34], where the stars were proved to be animated beings feeding on aether and consisting themselves of that divine substance (which according to Aristotle in *De caelo* I, was called αἰθὴρ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀεὶ θεῖν) of which the human mind was

[31] 1178a2: Δόξειε δ'ἂν καὶ εἶναι ἕκαστος τοῦτο, εἴπερ τὸ κύριον καὶ ἄμεινον. Cf. *Protrept.* 10c Ross: the νοῦς is the Divine in us. De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* II, 418b.
[32] *De re publ.* VI, 26. The spirit of Scipio Africanus Maior addresses the younger Scipio.
[33] The text is in my *Greek Phil.* III, no. 959b.
[34] See fr. 21 of Π.φιλ. in Ross, *Fragmenta selecta*; Cicero, *De nat. deorum* II 15.42ff. In my *Greek Phil.* II, no. 431a-c.

supposed to consist as well[35], that we may be sure that in this passage Cicero had Aristotle's Π.φιλ. in mind. Certainly there is some relationship with Plato's *Timaeus*. But it is Aristotle who is the direct source.

II. *Man: soul and body*

Having started with the problems of ontology we are finding ourselves immersed in the problems concerning man, body and soul. Two questions might be raised here. (1) Does not Plato in the *Phaedo* speak about an enmity that almost naturally exists between the soul and the body, and what else is this than true and pretty sharp-edged dualism? (2) Is it not Plato who defined man as "a soul", and does not he by that definition alone take his place in the history of philosophy as a true dualist in his view of man, or, if one prefers the term of "spiritualism", as a clear-cut spiritualist, more than anybody?

One thing at any rate is clear: that the soul is of a higher order than the body is an absolutely basic principle for Plato, from his Socratic dialogues such as the *Apology* and the *Crito* up to his last work, the *Laws*. In the *Apology* his Socrates says to his judges that he thinks it his duty, imposed on him by the Divinity, unceasingly to exhort his fellow-citizens and whomsoever he will meet, not to care for the acquisition of wealth and for reputation and honour instead of caring for wisdom and truth and the perfection of their souls[36].

In the *Crito* he asks whether life is worth living when the body is ruined by some incurable disease. Crito thinks not. And Socrates: "But is it worth living when that is ruined which is injured by the wrong and improved by the right? Or do we think that part of us, whatever it is, which is concerned with right and wrong is less important than the body?"—Crito: "Not at all".—Socr.: "But more important?"—Crito: "Yes, much more"[37].

This is one of those basic principles for the validity of which Socrates is ready to give his life. But notice that the same Socrates who is so firmly convinced of the superiority of Soul to Body, thought the body so important that he regarded life as not worth living, when the body would be in a hopelessly bad condition[38].

We moderns are almost without exception so spiritualist that we would not think of not admitting a student to the study of philosophy, were he

[35] "Quintum genus, eo quo essent astra mentesque", Cic., *Acad. post.* I 7.26. My *Greek Phil.* II, 431d.
[36] *Apol.* 29d-e (De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* no. 207).
[37] 47e-48a (De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* no. 215). Transl. by H. N. Fowler, slightly adapted.
[38] 47e.

not very good in gymnastics. His achievements in that field would seem indifferent to us with regard to his capability or incapability of the study of philosophy. To Plato not so. On the contrary, for the young man who wished to become a philosopher he thought the training of the body as important as the training of the intellect. And if the candidate should prove deficient in the one respect, he would be judged to be unfit for the other[39].

> "First of all, said I, the man who is to become a philosopher must not be one-sided in his love of labour, loving labour for the half of things, shunning it for the other half. That would make him a cripple. And this is the case whenever a man loves gymnastics and hunting and all bodily exercise, but does not like learning, takes no pleasure in hearing and is not a searcher for truth, but hates labour in all those matters. But deficient and crippled is also the man who has turned to the opposite state concerning love of labour."

That is how Plato's Socrates speaks in the *Republic*. Towards the end of the *Timaeus* Plato is considering the bad consequences springing from a disproportion between the two components of man[40]. "What is beautiful is never disproportioned", he declares at the outset. Now, if there is a disproportion between the soul and body of man, first his health will probably be earnestly disturbed, next—suppose a strong and great soul dwells in a rather weak and small body—such a man will never be beautiful.

Isn't it amazing? Who of us moderns would not admire the man with a strong and great soul living in a poor and perhaps ugly body? If his body were small, that would not shock us in the least. We would not think of calling him deficient for that reason. But Plato the dualist, who is said to have defined man as "the soul", says that this man *as a whole* is not beautiful, since he is deficient in the most important proportions.

Here too, we find the most emphatical condition, both of beauty and of health, to be that the soul should not be exercised without the body, nor the body without the soul[41]. "So the mathematician or one who is intensely occupied with any other intellectual discipline must give his body its due meed of exercise by taking part in athletic training; while he who is industrious in moulding his body must compensate his soul with its proper exercise in the cultivation of the mind and all higher education. Thus one may deserve to be called in the true sense a man of noble breeding"[42].

[39] *Rep.* VII 535c-d; De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* no. 300.
[40] 87cff.
[41] 88b5.
[42] 88c (transl. Cornford).

Finally, in Plato's last work, the *Laws*, in the proem—an explanatory and hortatory prelude to the laws, properly speaking[43]—a scale of values is drawn up which appears as follows. As the first and highest of all, of course, the Gods must be honoured. For God must be for us "the measure of all things", and we, in order to become dear to Him, must endeavour to become like Him, so far as we possibly can. Plato then proceeds to give an outline of prescriptions about honouring the Gods, next offering worship to lower, semi-divine beings. They are mentioned in the traditional order: first daemons, next "heroes", after these the ancestors. Next follow honours to be paid to living parents. (This goes before honouring one's own soul.) "For it is only right that we should pay our first and greatest obligations, the oldest of our debts, and that we should believe that all we possess and have belongs to our parents, who have brought us up, to place it at their disposal for their support to the best of our abilities, first of all our material possessions, then our physical strength, and thirdly our spiritual wealth, repaying them for the care and trouble they devoted to us when we were young, repaying them when they are old and in their old age in great need of support."

All this is old Greek wisdom. Most probably it goes back to Pythagoras and his School[44] After these prescriptions Plato's lawgiver passes to man's own belongings[45]. The most precious thing we have is our own soul, for it is both the most divine and most properly our own. Hence man has to honour his own soul above all other things on earth, immediately after the Gods and secondary divinities, ancestors and parents. He has to honour his soul above wealth and honour, above pleasures and desires. But next, as the second precious gift received and trusted to our cares, we have our body. It has to be honoured third.

Such a text is important: it shows once more how great a misunderstanding it is to think that for Plato the body was something evil and abject. The body was for him a τίμιον, and "Of evil things nothing is to be honoured", he says in the above-quoted passage[46].

The body, then, has to be honoured, but it has to be honoured in its due and natural place, that is, after and next to the soul, since it is naturally subservient to it. The order may not be reversed. For "of the things we possess the stronger and the better are the ruling ones, the

[43] The proem begins in *Laws* IV 715e and may be taken to run up to 718b5. It is continued in V, from the beginning (726e) up to 734e.
[44] Cf. Iamblichus V.P.37, and my comments on it in *Pythagoras and Early Pythagoreanism*, 70ff.
[45] *Laws* V, 726c-728d; De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* I, no. 375b.
[46] 727a: τῶν δὲ χαχῶν οὐδὲν τίμιον.

weaker and less good are those that serve,"[47] and of our own possessions the soul is clearly the θειότατον. Thus, in the *Republic* of the three parts of the soul the λογιστικόν had the leading role, and it is this part which in the *Timaeus* is called τὸ κυριώτατον παρ' ἡμῖν ψυχῆς εἶδος[48], with a term which denotes both the *ruling character* of that kind of soul and that it is its *most essential part*. Therefore it has been placed at the top of the body and exercises as it were the function of a guardian angel, a guide given by the Divinity to each of us[49]. Its task is to raise us from the earth to that which is beyond, the things eternal and divine, from which the soul had its origin and to which it is akin.

A few lines further in the same passage the thinking part of the soul is again referred to as a *daimon* dwelling in us[50]. One may render: "a divine being". That is translating correctly. Plato also speaks of "the divine in us"[51]. "The motions akin to the divine part in us are the thoughts and revolutions of the universe"[52].

We know this thought in Plato. In the same sense he wrote in *Tim.* 47b-c: "The God invented and gave us vision in order that we might observe the circuits of intelligence in the heaven and profit by them for the revolutions of our own thought, which are akin to them, though ours be troubled and they are unperturbed"[53]. For this reason he said in the same passage that sight is the cause of the greatest benefits to us[54]. In the *Phaedo* he did not speak with so much enthusiasm about sight. It is true that according to Socrates in that dialogue seeing certain objects belonging to a certain person can remind a man of that person himself, for instance, a lyre or a cloak which a boy is wont to use, may remind one of the body himself, and on seeing a picture of Simmias, one can remember Simmias himself[55]. Yet, in that dialogue Socrates exhorts his friends to turn their minds away from visible things as soon as possible. The heavenly bodies and their regular courses did not yet come in then. That is a thing which seems to have taken a larger place in Plato's later

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[47] 726e: τῶν οὖν αὐτοῦ τὰ δεσπόζοντα ἀεὶ προτιμητέον τῶν δουλευόντων.

[48] *Tim.* 90a.

[49] Ibid.: ὡς ἄρα αὐτὸ δαίμονα θεὸς ἑκάστῳ δέδωκεν. The word δαίμων anyhow must not be translated by the English "daemon". "Guardian angel" is a correct rendering. The ἀγαθὸς δαίμων as a conductor and guide to each individual man is a well-known concept in Greek religious thought.

[50] 90c5: τὸν δαίμονα σύνοικον ἐν αὐτῷ.

[51] 90c7-8: τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν θεῖον.

[52] 90c8-d1.

[53] *Tim.* 47b6-c4; De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* I, no. 355; transl. Cornford.

[54] 47a1-2.

[55] *Phaedo* 73d-74a.

thought, where we find it particularly emphasized in the *Timaeus* and the *Laws*[56].

It has been said that the word νοῦς was not used by Plato to signify the thinking part of man's soul. This is not correct. It is true that his terminology was not so fixed as it is in later Neoplatonists. Purely noetic thought is called in the *Republic* νοῦς or νόησις[57], in the *Phaedo* it is referred to as "the soul itself" or "the soul alone and by itself"[58]. In this context he uses repeatedly the terms εἰλικρινής or καθαρός[59].

It is not different from that which in the *Timaeus* is repeatedly referred to as "the divine" or "the divine in us"[60]. In Plato's late style things are mostly referred to by a periphrastic formula, very rarely by their name[61]. But the term νοῦς for human thinking appears at least thrice in the *Timaeus*. (1) *Tim.* 29b6: That which is permanent and stable is transparent for νοῦς (μετὰ νοῦ καταφανές). (2) In the very important passage on the Demiurge's thoughts about the world-to-be-created, *Tim.* 30b1-2: "When thinking it over, the Demiurge found that of those things which are visible by nature nothing that is not endowed with νοῦς will be more beautiful than that which possesses νοῦς (οὐδὲν ἀνόητον τοῦ νοῦν ἔχοντος κάλλιον ἔσεσθαι).

In the description of the human body the thinking part of the soul is repeatedly referred to as "divine" or "the divine in us"[62]. But in the description of the liver the term νοῦς appears again.

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[56] Cf. Fr. Solmsen, "Plato and Science", in: *Interpretations of Plato*, A Swarthmore Symposium ed. by H. F. North (Mnemos., suppl. 50), Leiden 1977, 90f.

[57] Towards the end of the divided line passage, 511d. But cf. 508d5: νοῦν ἔχειν φαίνεται; 511d2-5, where geometrical thought is referred to as διάνοια, ἀλλ'οὐ νοῦν, ὡς μεταξύ τι δόξης τε καὶ νοῦ τὴν διάνοιαν οὖσαν. Note that Plato does not only speak of νοῦν ἔχειν, but that the thinking part itself is called νοῦς. Also *Rep.* VII 517c3: ἀλήθειαν καὶ νοῦν.

[58] E.g. *Phaedo* 65d1, 66d8, e6, 67b5, e6, 79d: αὐτὴ καθ' αὑτήν. Cf. *Rep.* VI 510b, where ἡ ψυχή is the subject both of mathematical and of purely "noetic" thinking, the latter without εἰκόνες, αὐτοῖς εἴδεσι δι' αὐτῶν τὴν μέθοδον ποιουμένη.

[59] E.g. *Phaedo* 66a1-2, 67b1.

[60] *Tim.* 69c2-3 and d6. I shall discuss these passages somewhat later on.

[61] I could give a whole list of periphrastic expressions in the *Timaeus*. Here are a few instances.

70c5: τὴν τοῦ πλεύμονος ἰδέαν ("the lungs");
71a8: τὴν ἥπατος ἰδέαν ("the liver");
74d2: τὴν τῶν νεύρων φύσιν ("the sinews");
75a6: τὸ τῆς γλώττης εἶδος ("the tongue");
75d6: τὴν τοῦ στόματος δύναμιν ("the mouth");
76c2: τὸ τριχῶν γένος ("hairs").

If then this is Plato's usual way of expressing himself, one can hardly wonder when finding the thinking part of the soul referred to as τὸ κυριώτατον παρ' ἡμῖν ψυχῆς εἶδος (90a2-3).

[62] Above, n. 60.

(3) *Tim.* 71b3: "This organ which is tight and shining, reflects just as a looking-glass the images of the thoughts that come down to it from the power of the thinking part of the soul"[63].

That it is correct to understand νοῦς as "the thinking part of the soul", can be seen in the preceding passage 69c-d, where it is said that the Demiurge himself is the Creator of "that which is divine" in us[64], while he tells the divine Star-souls created by him to make the mortal part of man[65]. In our passage the thinking part of the soul as the ἀθάνατον is opposed to the θνητόν which is secondarily created together with the body by the "created gods".

Yet, in the second part of the *Timaeus* Plato is earnestly concerned about the whole of man. It is the συναμφότερον that has his full attention. It is a whole of two parts which are different, but so that one of the two has the leading part—or at least *should* have that part—while the other is subordinate to it. And precisely on this subordination depends the well-being of the συναμφότερον, so much so that without it there cannot even exist a whole worthy of that name.

If the question is raised of whether in Plato's view man can be an actual unity and if some people think there are grounds to doubt that, we must firmly reply that for Plato, without any doubt, man can be one and has the particular task of being so. He can be one if, and only if, that part of him which by nature is fit for ruling actually has the leading part, while the other is subdued,—that is: not eliminated, but subordinated. This is an ideal, but an ideal that can be realized.

This view of man in the *Timaeus* does not differ from that of the *Republic.* There, too, even in such an early book as the first (which may date from before the founding of the Academy) the soul's particular ἔργον is defined as: "*taking care of, ruling and deliberating* and all that kind of things"[66], while the principle of subordination is essential in the construction of the order of the state in the following books, which results in the definition of justice in book IV. Without that principle no well-being either of the individual or of socio-political life is possible in Plato's view.

But what about the *Phaedo*? Is not Plato's view of man in the *Timaeus* very different indeed from that of his Socrates in the *Phaedo*, who starts almost directly with explaining to his friends that the philosopher's life—which, after all, is the best kind of human life—is nothing but an exercise in dying[67]? Now this is clearly based on a view of man in which

[63] ἡ ἐκ τοῦ νοῦ φερομένη δύναμις ... φοβοῖ μὲν αὐτό e.q.s.
[64] τῶν μὲν θείων γίγνεται δημιουργός (69c3).
[65] 41a-d, 69c-d.
[66] *Rep.* I 353d (De Vogel, *Greek Phil.* I, no. 275a).
[67] 64a-67b.

the soul is strongly opposed to the body, so much so that Socrates speaks there about philosophers as having *a continual quarrel with the body*[68]. What else is this than saying that there is, and naturally must be, *a state of enmity* between soul and body, if a man is coming up to the highest standard of humanity? In the *Timaeus*, on the other hand, we found the ideal of a harmonious development of soul and body by an equal training of both of them. If a man acts in this way, "he will not be leaving foe ranged by foe to engender warfare and disease in his body, but will have friend ranged by the side of friend for the production of health"[69].

In the last-quoted lines, by the way, he does not refer to the soul-body relation, but to the way in which the different parts of the body are disposed the one towards the other. The state of internal friendship thus created in the body, however, is the result of the soul's wise regulating power, which never leaves the body in a state of rest, but by keeping it in motion holds its elements, which have their proper motions, in a natural balance.

Again, is there not a striking difference between the *Phaedo* approach of the soul-body relation and the *Timaeus* approach?

A change in Plato's view of man?

In a sense there is a striking difference, indeed. When speaking of a different approach, one is on the way to taking the right view of it.

It is the same philosopher who in the earlier dialogue approached the same problem in a way different from the later. In the earlier dialogue he was concerned with the problem of how to form philosophers, in the later dialogue the mature philosopher gives advice about how to live in a body. His advice is meant for anyone. He is not particularly concerned with philosophers. In the later dialogue the problem itself is as "dualist" as it was in the earlier one: it is still the problem of a soul which finds itself in a body. But the problem of "how to live in this situation" is here asked in the most general form, regarding any kind of man, including those who are physically less favourably disposed than the average. It is the mature philosopher who turns to this problem. He did not change his view of man as a compound of two heterogeneous parts, one of which has to rule the other. Perhaps the "continual quarrel", mentioned above, has settled down a bit for him. That is not improbable. One might gather this from the changed approach.

[68] 67e5: διαβέβληνται μὲν πανταχῇ τῷ σώματι. The rendering "a continual quarrel" is Hackforth's in his translation of the *Phaedo.*
[69] *Tim.* 88e (translation of Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology*).

It does seem to me that in the *Timaeus* the unity of man is saved more than in the *Phaedo*. It is saved by subordination. Thus the "state of enmity" between the two components is altered into harmony. And that is certainly not new in the *Timaeus*: it was fully present in the concept of justice in *Rep*. IV.

An objection

None the less, some *Phaedo* readers may feel not quite satisfied. They might have the impression that the present author is tending to minimize that dualism of soul and body which, in fact, takes such an important place in the discussion of the *Phaedo*. Was it sufficiently brought out that in those discussions death is constantly referred to as *a release*: a release "from the body's fetters" (67d) or a release "from prison" (82d-83b); as *a purification* (67a-c), a being purified from "the *taint* of the body" (*sic*, 83d);[70] that philosophical insight (φρόνησις) is referred to as a kind of καθαρμός (69c1)?

All this is true, and a few more things may be added. It is right in the opening pages of the *Phaedo* that Socrates, in reply to an objection of Cebes, refers to "what is told about these things in the Mysteries: that we men are in a kind of prison, and we are not allowed to release ourselves from it and run away". Socrates says that he has been greatly impressed by this doctrine and found it profound.

Two or three notes to this passage. (1) A past generation translated the words ἔν τινι φρουρᾷ ἐσμεν by: "we are as it were on a guard-duty". Obviously this would fit excellently into a Christian view of life, but Greek parallels rather speak against this translation[71]. I think, indeed, that the author means that we are in a kind of prison, just as in 82e he speaks about the soul as being totally bound in a body and thus forced to look at existing things "as through an enclosure" (ὥσπερ διὰ εἱργμοῦ) which is, in fact, a prison.

(2) The word "doctrine" for "the λόγος told in the Mysteries" sounds quite natural in English, but is, in fact, not an exact rendering. "Doctrine" is just a bit too rigid. It must be remembered that Plato's Socrates expresses himself as undogmatically as possible: "a tale told in the Mysteries". He was deeply impressed by it. Yet, the term "doctrine" suggests something more and something different.

(3) The "tale" said that we are "*in a sort of prison*": ἔν τινι φρουρᾷ ἐσμεν. The τινι by its very vagueness underlines the metaphorical character of

[70] 83d: τοῦ σώματος ἀναπλέα ἐξιέναι, as opposed to καθαροὶ ἀπαλλαττόμενοι (67a).
[71] Cf. Burnet's note on B3, and Hackforth's *Phaedo*-translation, 36, n. 4.

the statement. Thus, in 82e he says: "*as it were* through an enclosure, to look at things existing through that"[72]. It could not have been said more cautiously—and less dogmatically.

This is a truly Platonic touch which should not be neglected. Those who speak of Plato's "dualism" referring to what they call "his σῶμα σῆμα doctrine" or his subscribing to that doctrine, say just a little bit too much, and by thus expressing themselves introduce their readers and hearers into a climate which is not exactly that of Plato's Socrates.

By this statement I do not for a moment wish to deny that, in fact, Plato was deeply impressed by the λόγος about the soul told in the Mysteries. He took it quite seriously. And I am sure that, if one had asked him, even many years after writing the *Phaedo*, whether he still felt about life and death as he did in the *Phaedo*, he would have answered in the affirmative. A "quarrel with the body" would have seemed unavoidable to him for a man who wished to be a philosopher, but wasn't it only natural that the quarrel would be most violent in the years of a younger man who still had to form his mind and character, and had to find that state of moral equilibrium in which the lower parts of the soul were subdued to the higher?

It must be remembered here that for Plato a philosopher's task was not to lead a kind of contemplative life, in constant retirement from the world. On the contrary, for him the philosopher's duty was here, in this world, in the midst of his fellow-men: he had to lead them by governing the state. And this was the duty of a mature age.

A gnostic view of the world?

By the last-mentioned point we touch on another problem which might still be raised in the form of another objection to the above offered treatment of the dualist thesis. It runs as follows.

Did not Plato teach that man should as soon as possible "fly" from here because, as he says, "this place is haunted by evil"[73]? Is not this a kind of gnostic view of the world, such as became powerful in later Antiquity and left its traces till deep into the Christian era?

This touches on the problem of evil, a problem which took a great place in Plato's thought. Plato takes a firm and quite clear position in it. The belief in divine Providence was for him an absolutely fundamental conviction. It must have been so for his master Socrates—Xenophon and

[72] ὥσπερ διὰ εἱργμοῦ διὰ τούτου σκοπεῖσθαι τὰ ὄντα. Cf. 67d1: ἐκλυομένην ὥσπερ ἐκ δεσμῶν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος.
[73] *Theaet.* 176a.

Plato agree on this point—; we find it in the second book of the *Republic*[74], where, in a sense, the nature of God is defined; in the *Timaeus*, where the Demiurge acts as divine Reason, creating the visible world, "a perfect living being", in orderly fashion and full of beauty, because it was made after a divine pattern, and "as much as possible like himself"[75]; and lastly we find it in the *Laws*, where incurable atheists are not even tolerated (b.X), while in the last book again the existence of the Gods is proved from cosmic order[76].

In the above-mentioned passage of *Rep.* II it is categorically posited that God cannot be the cause of evil, only of good things; of evil other causes have to be sought for. Which were they in Plato's opinion? First of all, "matter"—either the physical elements or some unqualified material principle—could not be the first cause of things. Matter can be explained only by that which is superior to it, and that is Soul. This was Socrates' objection to the older Greek philosophers' explanation of Nature. It is also Plato's conviction, vigorously expressed in book X of the *Laws*[77]. Here it is maintained that soul is ontologically prior to "body" (i.e. anything that is material); moreover, since it, and it alone, is a self-moving principle, it alone can be a cause, both of good and of evil.

Then follows that passage which has given rise to a really dualist interpretation and frequently is called the "passage of the two world-souls"[78]. In Antiquity it was Plutarch who understood the passage in this sense. Obviously he was influenced by Persian Mazdeism. However, in that passage of the *Laws* no more is declared than that one soul only cannot account for all things happening in the world, both good and evil, but *as a minimum* the existence of two souls has to be assumed, one of which can effect the good, while the other can produce the opposite[79].

This is a very important statement indeed. What follows is no less important. "It is Soul that leads everything in the heavens, on earth and in the sea by its proper motions, and when it does so with the support of Reason (νοῦς), it does well; however, when acting without Reason —given up to foolishness—it works the opposite way. Now what kind of a soul shall we say rules the heavens, the earth and the whole circular movement of the universe? That which is wise and full of virtue, or that

[74] 379a-c.
[75] *Tim.* 29c.
[76] *Laws* XII 966d-967a.
[77] 891cff.; deV., *Greek Phil.*, nos. 388-390.
[78] 896d5-897b6.
[79] δυοῖν μὲν γέ που ἔλαττον μηδὲν τιθῶμεν.

which possesses none of these qualities?"—He gives the reply himself[80]. "If the whole universe and all that is in it moves in a way similar to the motion of *Noûs*, it is clear that we must say that the best Soul takes care of the whole cosmos and leads it along that way." On the other hand, "if it moves frantically and disorderly, then the bad one". In the following pages the author shows that the motion of the universe is akin to that of *Noûs*, which is circular.

It is here exactly as in the *Timaeus*[81]: the possibility that this world, which is so beautifully ordered, would not have been made by a good Creator, according to *Noûs* and after a divine pattern, is indignantly rejected. Nevertheless, Plato was a realist, aware of the presence of many evil things, much more numerous even than the good ones—Πολὺ γὰρ ἐλάττω τἀγαθὰ τῶν κακῶν ἡμῖν[82]. That was said in the *Republic*, but it is repeated in the last book of the *Laws*[83].

Whence, then, do those evil things come into being?

—Plato gave us his reply: soul, in so far as it is not ruled by *Noûs*, must be the cause. And that soul which is not ruled by *Noûs*, is obviously not a divine soul. Is it a human soul which has gone astray, either a soul bound within a body or a soul that has left its body "tainted" by its desires and therefore mischievous and restless. That is why evil "haunts this place".

Physical ἀνάγκη, too, has its rôle in the visible world. Plato speaks about it in the *Timaeus*[84] and emphatically gives it a subordinate place. "For the generation of this universe was a mixed result of the combination of Necessity and Reason. Reason overruled Necessity by persuading it to guide the greatest part of the things that become towards what is best; in that way and on that principle this universe was fashioned in the beginning by the victory of reasonable persuasion over Necessity."

Does this mean that "Necessity" is subordinate in the sense that *ultimately everything* in nature is under the control of Reason?—It would be so, if it had been said that Reason succeeds in persuading Necessity *completely*. But that is exactly not what is said. It is said that Reason "overruled" by persuading Necessity so as to lead most of the things that become towards what is best. Not *all things*. Obviously then, in Plato's view, though *in the main* things happening in nature happen according to the lead of Reason, there always remain things which Reason cannot

[80] 897c-d.
[81] 27d5-30c1.
[82] *Rep.* II 379c; deV., *Greek Phil.* 279a.
[83] 906a: Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ συγκεχωρήκαμεν ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς εἶναι μὲν τὸν οὐρανὸν πολλῶν μεστὸν ἀγαθῶν, εἶναι δὲ καὶ τῶν ἐναντίων, πλειόνων δὲ τῶν μή,—(deV., *Greek Phil.*, no. 393).
[84] 46c (see Cornford's comments on this passage in *Plato's Cosmology*, 159-177); 47e-48a, 68e-69a.

account for. That is why in this very opening paragraph of his description of the genesis of the visible world he says that we have *not only* to do with the works wrought by the craftsmanship of Reason, but have to bring in "the Errant Cause" as well[85]. And did he not say right in the beginning that "God" (the Demiurge), because He is good, wished to make all things *as much as possible* like Himself[86], and again that God wished that all things would be good and, *so far as possible*, nothing of an inferior order[87]?

Now, of course, nothing is as easy as saying: well then, here we have clearly what must be called Plato's dualism. His Demiurge is not an almighty God. He was not able to make a perfect world, because there were resisting elements, not created by Him and limiting His creative power.

Whether or not one is thinking here of some pre-existing Matter, this much is sure that, anyhow, for any theist, either Christian or not, it is very hard indeed to maintain that God created a *perfect* world, which would be *fully* like Himself. Not only realism, but also piety would advise him to add such a formula as the "as much as possible" or "so far as possible" which Plato added, too. Is there any dualism implied in these words which, after all, do not say anything than that "the world is not God"?

Here we find ourselves confronted with the problem of whether Plato in his *Timaeus* assumes some pre-existing Matter, some kind of unordered material, a "chaos", out of which the Demiurge created a "cosmos". This is, in fact, what we find described in *Tim.* 52e-53b. For this reason the early Christian Apologists, in particular Theophilus and the writer of the *Cohortatio*[88], charged Plato with having taught the existence of some kind of Matter "coeternal" or "coeval with God". To this charge Origen opposed that, in spite of the deliberately chosen mythical form of the account of the genesis of the world in the *Timaeus*, Plato definitely did not mean that this genesis took place in time; for time originated with the cosmos itself or, more properly speaking, is inherent in it. Which implies that, since there "was" no time before the cosmos, there could not have existed any kind of a chaos, conceived according to the description of *Tim.* 52e-53b. Thus, that whole conception must be taken as a byproduct of metaphorical language.

[85] Tim. 48a.
[86] Tim. 29e2: πάντα ὅτι μάλιστα ἐβουλήθη γενέσθαι παραπλήσια ἑαυτῷ.
[87] 30a2-3: βουληθεὶς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἀγαθὰ μὲν πάντα, φλαῦρον δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι κατὰ δύναμιν,—
[88] Theophilus, *Ad Autolycum* II 4; *Cohort. ad Graecos* c. 22. De Vogel, *Theoria*, Studies over de Griekse Wijsbegeerte, ch. XII, 192ff.

I think this is correct. Two points, however, should be remembered in this context. First, Plato's ἀνάγκη or physical Necessity was not anything like our concept of the "laws of nature". On the contrary, these laws represent the cosmic order which in Plato's view had its ground in the divine Mind or *Noûs*. Secondly, there are certainly, according to his view, "things" or "powers" or "elements", whatever one wishes to call them, that act against the rational Power of the Divine Intellect that rules the world. These are *secondary causes* acting within the framework of the order of the whole. The Rational Cause is the primary cause which, thus, must be called "overruling Necessity"[89].

If one finds fault with Plato for this explanation, one should remember that it is hardly possible, in fact, to ascribe all things happening in nature immediately to the Creator's will. It is really not "Greek paganism" alone, it is not Plato in particular, who thought that quite a number of things in nature must be due to secondary causes. The term of dualism can hardly be applied to this case.

Perhaps one might have the impression that the *Theaetetus* passage of the flight from here betrays a kind of gnostic feeling about the world. If this suggestion is made, we must reply: this is an error. What the passage says, is not that an evil Power, or some evil Spirits, rule this world. That is a thought which Plato actually abhorred as a blasphemy[90]. That the Builder of this world—which is beautiful and ordered, while He himself is good—would have performed his creative work looking up to another example than the eternal and divine, is to him a thing that cannot even be mentioned without impiety[91]. He *did* believe that there are many evil things in this world, more numerous even than there are good things. The last-mentioned statement is not in the *Theaetetus* passage, but we find it twice in other works[92], and this may impress us as rather a pessimist view of the world. Yet, Plato was not a pessimist. His *Republic* bears witness to a strong belief in the possibility of shaping the reality of this human life of ours after the transcendent Good, to the knowledge of which the life of the true *philosophoi* was directed. And even when that hope was lost, he did not at all despair, but immediately sat down to find another way to save human society, so that it might live in justice and in peace. And in that last of his works he emphatically spoke about divine Providence which is the cause of the manifest beauty and order of the

[89] *Tim.* 48a2; Νοῦ δὲ ἀνάγκης ἄρχοντος—
[90] *Laws* X 897b-d (*Greek Phil.*, 390b) and the following pages. Cf. *Laws* XII, 966d-968a.
[91] *Timaeus* 29a: ὃ μηδ' εἰπεῖν τινι θέμις.
[92] *Rep.* II 379c, *Laws* X 906a (*Greek Phil.*, nos. 379a, 393a). See above, p. 181.

universe and is concerned not only with the cosmic order as a whole, but cares for individual man. For here we hear that God assigns to human souls their places in such a way, that they may overcome evil as easily and well as possible. In the eternal conflict between good and evil we may be certain that "Gods and daimons" are our helpers: they take part in the struggle, at the side of each of us[93].

No doubt Plato believed in evil spirits[94]. But he believed in good spirits as well. According to an ancient religious tradition he ranked these *daimones* between Gods and man: they are *supra*-human, but they are not divine[95]. We found already that, towards the end of the *Timaeus*, he says that "the most essential part of our soul", the thinking part, was given by God to each of us as a "daimon"[96], that is: *a good genius*, protecting and leading us by the right way through the difficulties of life on earth. It is the old idea of the ἀγαθὸς δαίμων as a "guardian angel" which is present here. This is ancient Greek, it is not gnostic.

This much about the *Theaetetus* passage. That evil is located there especially on or "about" our earth, needs hardly any commentary. Of course it is absent from that "pure" and perfect world of intelligible Being, nor could we wonder that, at certain moments at least, Plato's Socrates says explicitly that one can best leave this place as soon as possible and fly "yonder", beyond evil and human pettiness. Which does not rule out the fact that he knew his task was here; and this is what he did not cease to teach his students, fellow-workers, pupils.

Man defined as "a soul"?

We come to the other objection raised above[97]: did not Plato define man as "a soul", and is not this a truly dualist conception?

First, in which of Plato's dialogues does this definition occur?—One passage only can be mentioned: it is in the *Alcibiades Maior*, 130c. It is found in no other of Plato's dialogues. The closest parallel we can find is in the *Timaeus*, where the thinking part of the soul is referred to as τὸ κυριώτατον παρ' ἡμῖν ψυχῆς εἶδος[98]: the kind of soul which is *most properly* called by that name, that which is "Soul" in the primary and most essential sense. For this is the leading part of man, so much so that, if *in his thoughts* a man is totally given up to his ambition or to his desires, the

[93] *Laws* X 904a-c, 906a-b (*Greek Phil.*, nos. 392-393).
[94] Cf. *Phaedo* 81b-d.
[95] E.g. Eros: *Symp.* 202d-203a.
[96] *Timaeus* 90a.
[97] P. 171.
[98] *Timaeus* 90a.

whole man will be absorbed by those things: as a person he will go down to that level. On the other hand, if by his thinking part he seeks for wisdom and for truth, the whole man will take part in immortality, while he is constantly absorbed in things immortal and divine. Thus, it is the leading part which actually makes a man that which he will become.

"A man is his soul". *Implicitly* we read this in the *Timaeus*. Yet, in that dialogue, man is the συναμφότερον, the "both-together", and it is *the whole* which receives its character by and from the leading part.

Implicitly we read this in the *Phaedo* too. But in none of Plato's dialogues besides the *Alcibiades* do we find the definition that "man is the soul".

No doubt the *Alcibiades* was considered as an authentic work of Plato by the Neoplatonists, and even a very important and, so to speak, representative work. None the less, it is not without suspicion for us. On the contrary, there are a number of small but more or less clear indications that point in the direction of the unauthenticity of this Platonic dialogue. E. de Strycker registered them precisely[99]. To our point he remarked very wisely that, though, roughly speaking, the view of man found in the *Alcibiades* is Platonic, yet it is expressed here in a slightly exaggerated form, such as Plato never used. And this very point, added to a few others, such as the usage of some rare word which does not occur anywhere else in Plato, is an argument against the authenticity.

As regards the contents, it is worth noticing that the definition "man is the soul" is inferred from the statement that man is a being which "uses a body" (τὸ τῷ σώματι χρώμενον)[100] or "rules a body" (τὸ τοῦ σώματος ἄρχον)[101]. "Does then the compound—τὸ συναμφότερον—rule the body, and is the compound "man"?"—To this question of Socrates[102] Alcibiades replies somewhat cautiously: "Perhaps so, indeed."—But Socrates rejects this energetically. "No, least of all, for if one of the two parts does not take part in the ruling, it is impossible that the whole-of-the-two rules."—Alcib.: "True".—Socr.: "Since then man is neither the body (which has been demonstrated before, on the grounds that man *uses* the body and, therefore, must be different from it)[103] nor the whole-of-the-two, he must be the soul."

If that is so, Plato appears to have been rather a monist, not a dualist. Only, he *did* define man as a συναμφότερον, of which the κυριώτατον εἶδος τῆς ψυχῆς had definitely the leading rôle, at least in so far as the in-

[99] "L'authenticité du Premier Alcibiade", in *Les études classiques* 11 (1942), 135-151.
[100] 129e11.
[101] 130a11.
[102] 130b8.
[103] 129e3-8.

dividual man was in a normal condition. By that definition both *the unity of man* was kept and the leading function of Reason was duly emphasized. In this view, we repeat, man was more essentially a unity than in Aristotle's where νοῦς was not a part of the compound of soul and body.

The unity of man safeguarded

Another objection might be made here. I can imagine that someone should feel inclined to speak in this way.

"You said that in the definition of man as a συναμφότερον *the unity of man* was guaranteed better than it was in the σύνολον of Aristotle. Well, I tell you frankly that this is turning things upside down. For Aristotle, the σύνολον was a natural whole, formed by two parts which, in fact, were no separate entities but "parts" distinguished the one from the other by the intellect only, and this in such a way that they are always conceived as correlatives, "matter" being the matter with regard to some definite "form", and "form" being the determining element of some particular "matter", which by its presence becomes that which it "potentially" is. Nothing of this in Plato's συναμφότερον. There, in fact, two essentially different entities are linked up the one with the other, so as to form a temporary combination which, because of the essentially different nature of the two, can hardly be called natural. There is a temporary unity, yes. But of what a character! The *Timaeus* myth, which has the one part of man created by the lower gods, perishable and not divine, and the other by the Demiurge himself who is Divine Reason and thus makes *the essential part* of the human soul immortal and divine,—is not that the most manifest expression of a dualist view of man that could have been thought out?

According to the *Timaeus* myth the "lower part" of the soul, created together with the body, is naturally mortal. But what do you think of that lovely tale in the *Phaedrus*[104], where the "good horses" bring the charioteer up to the outer circle of the heavens, from where he can see what is beyond: eternal Truth or Reality; and after having returned home the charioteer feeds his noble horses with nectar and ambrosia, a food for the immortals. What do you think of that? Does not Plato suggest here that the desires, when disciplined, can be raised to a higher level and be taken up into the order of the immortal Soul?—If so, we would here have a different and less dualist view of man than in the *Timaeus*. I should like to hear your opinion on this point."

If anybody spoke like this I would reply: "Thank you very much for

[104] *Phaedr.* 247a-e.

mentioning the *Phaedrus* passage. It is interesting indeed and gives a handle to such an inference as you propose. It reminds me strongly of St. Gregory of Nyssa: it is in his line indeed to regard the passions as capable of being raised to the level of νοῦς, and thus being immortalized and "defied". However, I am afraid that, together with the body, the passions had to wait for Christ in order to be "glorified" and found capable to enter heaven "after Him". As for Plato, I do not think he went that far. No doubt the noble horses of the *Phaedrus* are the disciplined desires which, in obedience to the leading of the charioteer (the rational Soul), served him well enough to enable him to behold eternal Truth. The horses themselves, however good they are, do not come up to that vision. That is reserved for the charioteer alone, who symbolizes that part of the soul which in the *Timaeus* is called the κυριώτατον εἶδος."

It is true, of course, that Plato held that passions can be "purified" and educated from the desire of earthly things to desiring things spiritual and divine. We all know the example of eros being thus purified and leading up to the vision of the Highest in the *Symposium.* This is suggestive, indeed. Is Eros himself capable of being "deified"?—I rather think, in Plato's view there is no longer any form of eros when a man has reached his goal, the vision of true and eternal Being. In that state of the mind, all wishes, all desires have been fulfilled. Man will be entirely absorbed in the vision of that indescribable Beauty.

That is what we literally read in the *Symposium*[105]. We should not forget it.

I do not think, then, that there is an essential difference between the *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* view of man on the one hand and the *Timaeus* view on the other. As for the σύνολον compared to the συναμφότερον, of course they are quite different. An important point, however, is too easily forgotten, viz. that the Aristotelian σύνολον does not comprehend what Aristotle called "the active Intellect" of man, which in the terminology of the *Timaeus* is τὸ κυριώτατον τῆς ψυχῆς εἶδος. Aristotle's σύνολον was the natural whole of the body with its proper soul which is mortal. *Noûs* alone is immortal and is ἀμιγὴς καὶ ἀπαθής,—which means that it does not mix up with the body and its πάθη. In fact in his view of man, Aristotle was very close to the *Timaeus* with its distinction between a mortal and an immortal Soul. He is just a bit more spiritualist than Plato was. For Plato never spoke of the union of soul and body (*including* the immortal Soul) as something unnatural,—Aristotle, at least in his younger years, did[106]. He even did so in a rather drastic form, when

[105] *Symp.* 211d-212a.
[106] *Eudemus*, fr. 5 Ross.

speaking of that union as something like what the Tyrrhenian pirates did with their captives, attaching living men to dead bodies, binding them face to face and member to member[107]. Here we find in the fragments of Aristotle's dialogues exactly that feature which we noticed in the *Alcibiades*: it is a somewhat exaggerated expression of a view of man which is close to Plato's, but has never been expressed by him in such a form. In fact, Plato neither said that "man is the soul" nor did he ever say that the union of body and soul is unnatural. As a matter of fact, he did not think so. Though he did most emphatically teach that the two parts of the συναμφότερον are heterogeneous, he was convinced that the union of the two for the duration of life on earth was according to the order of Nature, which he regarded as a divinely instituted order. It belonged to the proper task of the soul, its ἴδιον ἔργον, to take care of its body. Thus, he could certainly not call the union of the two unnatural.

Nor should it be said that Aristotle changed his view of man essentially in the time between writing his dialogues and writing the *De anima* which was a work of his last years. Certainly, the definition of soul as the first entelechy of a natural organical body[108] is a new formula, not used in the earlier works. But the "soul" which thus is said to form an essential unity with its body is a mortal soul, and νοῦς is explicitly said not to mix up with it nor to share its passions[109]. Now in this conception of a νοῦς χωριστὸς καὶ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἀμιγής Aristotle was in fact, as we noticed above, more "spiritualist" than Plato in the *Timaeus*. For Plato did not regard the "divine" part of the soul as altogether separated from the rest of man. He did distinguish it from the rest, but he did not cut it off from communication with it. Moreover, the communication he admitted was not one-sided. This remarkable feature of Plato's anthropology seems to be too little known or too easily forgotten[110].

How did Plato get his reputation?

This then being so, the question may be raised of "how then Plato came to be so generally considered to be a spiritualist", or say "a dualist", in his view of man. For this is even his standing epithet in modern anthropology, where he is regarded as the auctor of the dualist view of man found in Descartes. How, then, did he get that name? How is it that he has been so almost unanimously misunderstood?

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107 *Protrepticus*, fr. 10b Ross.
108 *De an.* II 1, 412a27-61; 65-6. De Vogel, *Gr.Ph.* II, 636.
109 *De an.* I 4, 408b18-30. deV., *Gr.Ph.* II, 634b.
110 *Tim.* 86b-87b.

We cannot answer this question unless we remember in which form Platon's philosophy entered the Middle Ages and the Italian Renaissance of the 15th century, and next, through the medium of Renaissance Platonism, the 17th and 18th centuries. That form was Neoplatonism, and more in particular the later Neoplatonism of Proclus and his followers. It is not to be ignored that Plotinus who was the founder of that renewed form of Platonism, definitely had a more spiritualist view of man than Plato in the *Timaeus*. For Plotinus, man was quite emphatically not the συναμφότερον but the spiritual man who is νοῦς[111]. Moreover, in the later Neoplatonist schools the *Alcibiades* was not only considered as authentic, but read and commented on as a leading introduction into Plato's thought. And with it the spiritualist definition of man was accepted as if it were the Master's view, which in fact it was *in a sense* but not immediately.

It had taken its origin in Plato's surroundings, where the *Major Alcibiades* was written and where Aristotle wrote his dialogues, the *Eudemus*, the *Protrepticus* and *Peri philosophias*, those famous and much read works which in the first cent. B.C. were so greatly enjoyed by Cicero who wrote his *Hortensius* after the model of the *Protrept.* and used the *P.philos.* amply in his *De natura deorum* and elsewhere. It was in the *Protrept.* that Hellenistic man could read that νοῦς alone is the divine in us and the most proper characteristic of man—ὁ νοῦς γὰρ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός[112], a doctrine which he could find confirmed in the *Nicom. Ethics* X 7: by that part of his which is the best, man is, properly speaking, what he is[113].

When in the *Somnium Scipionis*[114] the soul of the great Scipio declares that man is not his physical appearance, "sed mens cuiusque is est quisque", this certainly and firstly reminds us of Aristotle in the *Protrept.* Nevertheless, a passage such as *Tusc.* I 18-19 reveals to us that Cicero's ideas about "celestial immortality" were rather strongly tinged by the Stoic doctrine of πνεῦμα ἔνθερμον, which was supposed to be present in the hegemonikon in the highest degree.

Seneca too has a number of texts, both in his Letters and in his Consolations, which testify to rather a dualist conception of man, such as is usually called "Platonic"[115]. Roughly speaking, one may call it so. When looking closer at the context, however, one will find that anyway

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111 *Enn.* I 1, 7.16-18 and 10.1. The anthropology of Plotinus will be discussed *infra*, ch. VI.
112 Aristoteles, *Fragm.sel.* ed. W. D. Ross, *Protr.* 10c; deV., *Gr.Phil.* II, no. 418b.
113 *Eth.Nic.* X 7, 1178a2-4. The text is cited in my *Gr.Phil.* under 418d.
114 Cicero, *De republ.* VI 26, cited in my *Gr.Phil.* III, no. 959b. A succinct discussion is given under the text. *Tusc.* I 18.42-19.43 is found under 959a.
115 Seneca, *Epist.* 65.16; 102.22; *Ad Marciam de consolatione 25* (Texts in *Gr.Phil.* III, 960a, b and d); cf. *Ad Polybium* 9,2 (= *Gr.Phil.* III, 1223c).

we are not concerned here with a Platonism which stems directly from Plato's written works. It is rather a "development" which can be traced back to such peripherically "Platonic" writings as the *Alcibiades* and Aristotle's *Protrepticus*. W. Jaeger in his *Aristotle* (1923) pointed to the widespread and far reaching influence of Aristotle's literary writings: the *Eudemus, Protrept.* and *P.philos.* were still read by the Neoplatonists of the fourth and fifth centuries[116].

In this context we have to place such an author as Nemesius of Emesa and his well-known treatise *De natura hominis*. The author describes the different views of man, taught in the existing Schools of philosophy. When coming to Plato he declares: "Plato did not define man as the συναμφότερον; he taught that man is the soul". And he blames Plato for having given such a one-sided definition. Apparently he never saw the text of the *Timaeus*.

Now this book of Nemesius, a Christian author (bishop) of c.400 A.D., was much used throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It was in Nemesius, no doubt, that Pico della Mirandola found the inspiration for his picture of man as entirely free to make of himself whatever he liked: it is the idea of man as a μεθόριος, a "borderer" between two worlds, able to turn either downward, to the earth and everything belonging to it, or upward to the heavens, to intelligible Being and its eternal Beauty, and to God. It is in the line of Basil and Gregory of Nyssa that Nemesius follows up with his man as a μεθόριος; and in Pico the same "borderer", who can penetrate the whole universe and turn wherever he likes, is found again. It is usually considered to be an entirely new, specifically "Renaissance" view of man. In fact it is a Neoplatonist view, stemming from Plotinus and Christian Platonists after him.

Our Erasmus, too, had a touch of this Renaissance Platonist spiritualism. It appears in particular in his *Enchiridium militis Christiani*. Now, though we remarked that, if man is defined as "the soul" or say "the thinking part", this is rather a monist than a dualist definition, yet it is clear that such a monism could not fail to be taken as a symptom of dualism, since after all man is actually living in a body. That is how Plato came to be the classical example of a dualist in anthropology, not without any grounds, yet perhaps somewhat more than he actually was.

III. *The doctrine of First Principles*

Up to this point we have been discussing passages from the dialogues. The doctrine of the two ultimate principles, which is explicitly attributed

[116] Jaeger, *Aristotle*, 2nd ed. (Engl.) 1948, 31.

to Plato by Aristotle, did not yet come in. In the following pages we have to deal with that aspect of Plato's philosophy. For in that theory—which is too well attested to deny that Plato ever held it—we are again confronted with a kind of dualism, which seems to have taken a rather important place in Plato's later years.

(1) Our first text is Aristotle's, in *Metaph.* A 6, 987b18-22. It reads as follows.

Ἐπεὶ δ'αἰτία τὰ εἴδη τοῖς ἄλλοις, τἀκείνων στοιχεῖα πάντων ᾠήθη τῶν ὄντων εἶναι στοιχεῖα. ὡς μὲν οὖν ὕλην τὸ μέγα καὶ τὸ μικρόν εἶναι ἀρχάς, ὡς δ'οὐσίαν τὸ ἕν· ἐξ ἐκείνων γὰρ κατὰ μέθεξιν τοῦ ἑνὸς [τὰ εἴδη] εἶναι τοὺς ἀριθμούς.	But since the forms are cause of the other things, he thought that their elements are the elements of all things existing. As material principle, then, he assumed the great and the small, and as formal principle the one. For from the first-mentioned principle—(the indefinite)—stemmed the (ideal) numbers by participation in the one.

In this text there are two things that may seem strange to readers of Plato's dialogues who, first of all, have got the impression that Plato, of course, derived "all things" from those intelligible archetypes, called "forms", but cannot see that he again derived those forms from any higher principles. Next, in the dialogues they had not found anything like (ideal) numbers which, as a sort of super-νοητά would derive directly from those supposed ultimate principles. What they found in Plato was simply that things visible had their ground in things invisible, which are intelligible being (νοητά). As for mathematical objects, including numbers, they were classed as a lower kind of νοητά, still more or less connected with the visible, since in thinking them we make use of geometrical figures.

This is, no doubt, what we find in the passage of the divided line.[117] On the other hand, it is certainly implied in the argument of the hypothesis in *Phaedo* 100b-101d, that Plato assumed "ideas" (forms) of numbers. As instances he mentions here that things are two by partaking in the dyad, and that a thing will be one by partaking in unity. Is it not implied in this argument that "forms" of any number must be laid down as principles, in order to explain that things are so and so many? No doubt this would lead to an innumerable series of form-numbers. We can imagine that Plato later reduced this innumerable series to the "forms"

[117] *Rep.* VI 509b. In my *Greek Phil.* I, no. 294, p. 202 n. 2, the section of the νοητόν is rightly divided into two unequal parts, but the subdivision should here be into pure νοητά (left, instead of "dialectic") and *mathematical objects* (right, instead of "mathematical thinking").

of a very restricted number, which then took a special place in his intelligible world, so as to be conceived as a kind of super-forms to which all others were reduced. We do not find this in any of his dialogues, but it does appear in that passage of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics* in which it is said that Plato "reduced" the other things to forms, the forms to numbers, and from these went up to the first principles.[118]

How could we understand such a text, unless we had heard again and again from Aristotle that Plato *in a sense* had taught forms to be numbers,[119] that he had distinguished the form-numbers from mathematical numbers,[120] and limited the former kind to ten?[121] However, we have heard all that from Aristotle; moreover, he said in the above-quoted passage of *Metaph.* A 6 that Plato "derived the numbers" (sc. the ideal numbers) from the Indefinite Principle—there called τὸ μέγα καὶ τὸ μικρόν, elsewhere ἀόριστος δυάς—"by participation of the One".

(2) There, indeed, two ultimate principles were mentioned. Of the indefinite we have a description by another student of Plato, Hermodorus. This testimony, which explains to us in a most welcome way how the indefinite Principle—in Aristotelian terms called "matter"—came to be particularly referred to as "the great and small". The passage is preserved in Simplicius, *in Phys. Ar.* 247.30-248.15. I translated it and commented on it first in *Mnemosyne* in 1949. At present it is accessible in my volume *Philosophia* I, p. 264ff. Here I shall give only the second part (*Phys.* 248, 1-15), where the Indefinite is described. But not without a word of introduction.

In the immediately preceding lines of Hermodorus (quoted by Derkyllides, who again is quoted by Porphyry) it has been said that Plato divided things existing into two main sections, those that exist by themselves (τὰ καθ' αὑτά), instanced by man and horse, and on the other hand those that are related to other things. The second section was again subdivided into two: those having a relation to an opposite, such as good and bad, and on the other hand those that are correlatives to something else (τὰ πρός τι). Of these the second section was again subdivided into two parts, the limited and the unlimited. At the outset, before this division, he had mentioned the fact that Plato assumed an infinite principle which belonged to the class of things admitting of a more and less, to which belonged also the great and small. After the division he goes on as follows.

[118] Theophrastus, *Metaph.* 6b11-14 Ross-Fobes; deV., *Greek Phil.* I, no. 373.

[119] The statement is found in *Metaph.* A 9, 991b9, 992b15-18; 8,1073a18-21; M 7, 1081a5-8, 12-13; M 8, 1083a18-19. deV., *Greek Phil.* I, no. 362. Cf. also the reverse statement ("numbers are ideas") in *Metaph.* M 8, 1084a7-9, N 5, 1092b8-18, N 2, 1090a4-6. *Greek Phil.* no. 363.

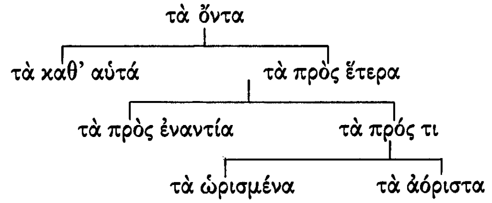
[120] *Metaph.* N 3, 1090b32-36 (*Greek Phil.* 363b); cf. M 7, 1083a31-35, M 6, 1080b11-14; *Eth. Nic.* A 4, 1096a17-19 (*Greek Phil.* 367). *Metaph.* M 6, 1080a30-35).

[121] *Metaph.* M 8, 1084a12; *Phys.* 206b30-33. *Greek Phil.* 366.

καὶ τὰ μὲν ὡς μέγα πρὸς μικρὸν λεγόμενα πάντα ἔχειν τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἧττον · ἔστι γὰρ μᾶλλον εἶναι μεῖζον καὶ ἔλαττον εἰς ἄπειρον φερόμενα · ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ πλατύτερον καὶ στενότερον καὶ βαρύτερον καὶ κουφότερον καὶ πάντα τὰ ὡσαύτως λεγόμενα εἰς ἄπειρον οἰσθήσεται. τὰ δὲ ὡς τὸ ἴσον καὶ τὸ μένον καὶ τὸ ἡρμοσμένον λεγόμενα οὐκ ἔχειν τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἧττον, τὰ δὲ ἐναντία τούτων ἔχειν. ἔστι γὰρ μᾶλλον ἄνισον ἀνίσου καὶ κινούμενον κινουμένου καὶ ἀνάρμοστον ἀναρμόστου, ὥστε αὐτῶν ἀμφοτέρων τῶν συζυγιῶν πάντα πλὴν τοῦ ἑνὸς στοιχείου τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἧττον δέδεκται. ὥστε ἄστατον καὶ ἄμορφον καὶ ἄπειρον καὶ οὐκ ὂν τὸ τοιοῦτον λέγεσθαι κατὰ ἀπόφασιν τοῦ ὄντος, τῷ τοιούτῳ δὲ προσήκειν οὔτε ἀρχῆς οὔτε οὐσίας, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀκρισίᾳ τινὶ φέρεσθαι.

And all that is called great with relation to small, has the more and less in it. For it is possible to be greater and smaller ad infinitum, and in the same way also broader and narrower, heavier and lighter and all such things will go on ad infinitum. But things like the equal and the permanent and the arranged do not contain the more and less; their opposites, however, do. For "unequal" admits of a difference of degree, and so does "moving" and "unarranged". Consequently of both last-mentioned groups of pairs all have accepted the more and less, except the principle that is one. Hence all these things (that admit of the more and less) must be called unstable, formless, unlimited and non-being, since being is denied of it. And to such things it neither belongs to have a beginning nor to have being, but it is proper to them to move without a purpose.

The division, then, made according to the method of diaeresis, was following:



Things having the more and less in them (τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἧττον) belong to the last-mentioned group, that of the ἀόριστα. Things limited, such as the equal, the permanent and the arranged, do not belong to that group, but to the left section, the ὡρισμένα; their opposites however—the unequal, the unstable (which is moving) and the unarranged—do.

The way in which Plato's material principle is described in the above-quoted passage recalls the description given of the ἄπειρον in the *Philebus*,

24a-25a.[122] There too the Indefinite is defined as "all that which has a more and less in it". "For wherever these two are in a thing, they do not let it be of a definite quantity: they always produce in it the tension between two extremes and make the definite quantity disappear. For as I said just now, if they did not make disappear the definite quantity but let it, together with Measure, come into the seat of the more-and-less and of the degrees of intensity (τὸ σφόδρα καὶ ἠρέμα), these would go away from their place." The perpetual oscillation between two extremes ("warmer—colder") would stop as soon as a definite quantity was reached. "For in fact, "the warmer", and also "the colder", are in a perpetual process and do not stay; the definite quantity, however, has come to a stop and has ceased going on. According to this argument, then, the warmer and its opposite must become indefinite".[123]

That is: "the warmer" and "the colder", like anything admitting of degrees, either of quantity or of intensity (the σφόδρα καὶ ἠρέμα)—the greater and smaller, the broader and narrower, the heavier and lighter of Hermodorus—fall under the heading of the ἀόριστα which are, so to speak, signed by the ἄπειρον; just as all things receiving a definite quantity—equality, Number or Measure—fall under the heading of the ὡρισμένα, signed by the πέρας principle of the *Philebus*.[124]

One misunderstanding must be excluded here. *Péras* and *ápeiron* in the *Philebus* are not concrete things: they are *principles*. Plato does seem to speak of them in the *Philebus*, just as we found it in the text of Hermodorus, as a *class* of being (γένος τῶν ὄντων). In a sense it is,—but as *one side or aspect* of concrete things: things existing are not just an ἄπειρον or ἀόριστον of which it could be said that it is non-being. Plato never thought in this manner about concrete things, and certainly here he does not do so either. What he does intend to say is: that concrete things *in so far as they admit of degrees*, either of quantity or of intensity, fall under the class or heading of the ἄπειρον, i.e. are marked by the character of the Indefinite.

They must be marked by the character of the limiting Principle, or say the Limit, as well. Otherwise they could not exist. Plato who in the *Republic* already answered the question of what is the object of "opinion" (δόξα) by saying that in our opinions we always have some definite object in mind, a "something", which thus cannot be just a non-being but must partake of being as well, is speaking in our *Philebus* passage in exactly the same way about concrete things. What does it mean to speak

[122] deV., *Greek Phil.* I, no. 347.
[123] *Phil.* 24c-d.
[124] *Phil.* 25a-b.

about "two kinds", the Indefinite and the Limit, and add a third which is said to be their "offspring" (ἔχγονον), which springs from the mixture of the two?[125] It is not so much two kinds *of* being, according to that which such a formula would mean to us—sc. two different groups of separately existing "things"—, but rather two kinds—i.e. two different *characters—in* being. Thus Plato's Socrates could speak about the "token" or "mark" of the Indefinite[126] and say that all things appearing to have the more-and-less in them or to admit of degrees of intensity, will fall into the class of the *ápeiron* and "be stamped with" that mark.[127]

The fact that, both in the *Philebus* and in the Hermodorus text, there is talk of a division of being, must not mislead us: it is not two classes of *things* that are referred to, it is two different "marks" or characters. A. E. Taylor understood this perfectly well when he translated Socrates' words in the *Philebus*: Τὸν θεὸν ἐλέγομέν που τὸ μὲν ἄπειρον δεῖξαι τῶν ὄντων, τὸ δὲ πέρας, as follows:

God, I believe we said, has revealed an Indefinite in things, and also a Limit.[128]

It is justified, then, to speak of *péras* and *ápeiron* as *principles* of being. They have their function on the level of visible things, but, as I am going to explain, not on that level alone. In visible things the *ápeiron* is present as the principle of indetermination. The other principle, the *péras*, must be present in them as well, in order to produce the result of a definite and measured being. In the *Philebus*[129] this was called "the offspring" (ἔχγονον) of the two.

Let us now return to the text of Hermodorus and re-examine the last lines of it. They were about things that have the more-and-less within them. In the preceding sentence those things were referred to in the plural. The concluding sentence ran: ὥστε ἄστατον καὶ ἄμορφον καὶ οὐχ ὂν τὸ τοιοῦτον λέγεσθαι κατὰ ἀπόφασιν τοῦ ὄντος. τῷ τοιούτῳ δὲ οὐ προσήκειν οὔτε ἀρχῆς οὔτε οὐσίας, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀκρισίᾳ τινι φέρεσθαι.

Τὸ τοιοῦτον, no doubt, took up the whole class of things having the more-and-less within it. Was it then correct to render the text as was done above:

"Hence *all these things* must be called unstable, formless, unlimited and non-being"?

Could that render Plato's doctrine concerning visible things as such? Could he have referred to them as "non-being, *since "being" is denied to them*"?

[125] *Phil.* 23c12-d1: τὸ δὲ τρίτον ἐξ ἀμφοῖν τούτοιν ἕν τι συμμισγόμενον. 26d7: ἓν τοῦτο... τὸ τούτων ἔχγονον ἅπαν.
[126] *Phil.* 24e5: τῆς τοῦ ἀπείρου φύσεως σημεῖον.
[127] Ibid., 25a4: μίαν ἐπισημαίνεσθαί τινα φύσιν.
[128] Ibid., 23c9-10.
[129] 26d7.

Hardly. So we must notice that the above-quoted translation is somewhat misleading. It rather suggests that the things as such are referred to, while in fact it is *things in so far as they are marked by the character of the ápeiron*; and of that character—referred to as τό τοιοῦτον—it is said that it is non-being "because being is denied of it".[130] With reference to sensible things the principle of indetermination in itself could be called non-being, a term expressing that the principle—which has a function in sensible things—does not exist by itself. Thus, in a sense we might say that it is sub-sensible. For if we had to give it its place in a scheme of Plato's conception of the whole of being, we would have to place it as a dyad (**) *under* the αἰσθητά, just as the other principle, the Limit, which with reference to sensible things is present in and works through the Ideas, apparently has to be traced back to the one (*) as its ultimate ground which, in accordance with the passage on the Good in *Rep.* VII, must have its place *above* intelligible Being.

*	ἕν (ἀγαθόν)
———	νοητά (εἴδη)
———	αἰσθητά
**	ἄπειρον (μέγα καὶ μικρόν)

The ἕν as one of the ultimate principles assumed by Plato was mentioned by Aristotle in the text quoted above (under 1). To the identity of the One and the Good testify both Aristotle and Aristoxenus.[131]

(3) A parallel to Hermodorus' description of the Indefinite principle is found in Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.* X (= *Against the Physicists* II) 262-276. The chapter as a whole is placed under the heading Περὶ ἀριθμοῦ and introduced as Pythagorean doctrine. "There are two principles of things existing", we learn here,[132] "the First One, by participation in which all the numbered ones are conceived as ones, and also the Indefinite Dyad, by participation in which the definite dyads are dyads."

Because the indefinite principle is here referred to as ἀόριστος δυάς, a term of which we know that it was peculiar to Plato, in contradistinction

[130] My own translation, printed in my *Philosophia* I, 266, has the singular here, no doubt because the author had the indefinite principle in mind. None the less, in this translation the shifting from "all these things" to the principle of indetermination is more implied than marked. This leaves a bit too much to the reader's intelligence and benevolence. Moreover, the justified remark made by Cherniss to the effect that Plato never said that "suchlike things" would not participate in being, was not sufficiently met by the commentary given on the next page (*Phil.* I, 267, taken over from the *Mnemosyne* article of 1949 without any alteration or correction). For the sake of clearness I correct it here.

[131] Arist., *Metaph.* N 4, 1091b13-14; *Eth Eud.* I 8, 1218a24-28; deV., *Greek Phil.* I, no. 364; Aristox., *Harm. Elem.* II, 30 Meibom.

[132] *Adv. math.* X 262, transl. R. G. Bury.

to the Pythagorean[133], we may be sure that we have to do here with that kind of platonized Pythagoreanism of which we have another specimen in the Πυθαγορικὰ ὑπομνήματα quoted by Alexander Polyhistor (in Diogenes Laertius VIII 25-35). The fusion of Plato's doctrine of the first principles with Pythagoreanism must go back at least to the second century B.C. but was certainly prepared by his immediate successors in the Academy.

In the sections 263ff. Sextus gives the same division of being as was mentioned by Hermodorus, though in a somewhat different form. Hermodorus made the division in the form of a diaeresis, thus beginning with a dichotomy; Sextus starts with a tripartition.

τὰ ὄντα

τὰ καθ' αὑτά | τὰ κατ' ἐναντίωσιν | τὰ πρός τι

Next, he defines the differences between the second and the third group. First, contraries such as good and evil, health and disease, motion and rest, do not exist and perish the one together with the other—when disease comes to an end, there will be health, when motion stops, there will be rest—; correlatives, however, exist and disappear together. "For there is no right unless a left also exists, nor a double unless the half also, whereof it is the double, preexists"[134]. Second, in the case of contraries as a rule there is no intermediate state; in the case of correlatives there is. For example, between the greater and the smaller there will be the equal, and between the more and less the adequate[135].

Subsequently the author proceeds to reduce the three groups of beings each to one genus, the καθ' αὑτά falling under the One, the contraries under the equal and unequal, and the correlatives under the genus of excess and defect (ὑπεροχὴ καὶ ἔλλειψις). Finally these three genera are traced back to two ultimate principles, the One and the Indefinite Dyad, since of the middle group the equal is found to fall under the One, while the other half, the unequal, falls under excess and defect, which in its turn must be traced back to the indefinite Principle, the ἀόριστος δυάς.

I give the abridged text of the last part, which deals with the reduction (*Adv. math.* X, 270-276)[136].

[133] Aristotle, *Metaph.* A 6, 987b25-27: τὸ δὲ ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀπείρου ὡς ἑνὸς δυάδα ποιῆσαι,—τοῦτ' ἴδιον. The term δυὰς ἀόριστος is frequently used by Aristotle in expounding Platonic doctrine in the ch. M 7 and 9 of the *Metaph.*, and in N 2 and 3.

[134] *Adv. math.* X, 266-267.

[135] Ibid., 268.

[136] deV., *Greek Phil.* I, 371b gives the text of Sextus, *Adv. Math.* X, from 263-276.

(270) καὶ δὴ τῶν μὲν καθ' αὑτὰ νοουμένων γένος ὑπεστήσαντο Πυθαγορικῶν παῖδες, ὡς ἐπαναβεβηκός, τὸ ἕν.

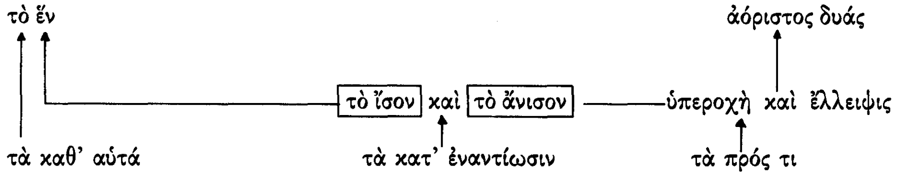
(271) τῶν δὲ κατ' ἐναντίωσιν ἔλεξαν ἄρχειν, γένους τάξιν ἐπέχον, τὸ ἴσον καὶ τὸ ἄνισον.

(273) τὰ μέντοι γε πρός τι ὑφέστηκε γένει τῇ τε ὑπεροχῇ καὶ τῇ ἐλλείψει.

(275) οὐκοῦν ἡ μὲν ἰσότης τῷ ἑνὶ ὑπάγεται, τὸ γὰρ ἓν πρώτως αὐτὸ ἑαυτῷ ἐστιν ἴσον, ἡ δὲ ἀνισότης ἐν ὑπεροχῇ τε καὶ ἐλλείψει βλέπεται.—ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ ὑπεροχὴ καὶ ἡ ἔλλειψις κατὰ τὸν τῆς ἀορίστου δυάδος λόγον τέτακται, ἐπειδήπερ ἡ πρώτη ὑπεροχὴ καὶ ἡ ἔλλειψις ἐν δυσίν ἐστι, τῷ τε ὑπερέχοντι καὶ τῷ ὑπερεχομένῳ.

(276) ἀνέκυψαν ἄρα ἀρχαὶ πάντων κατὰ τὸ ἀνωτάτω ἥ τε πρώτη μονὰς καὶ ἡ ἀόριστος δυάς.

Of the reduction the following scheme can be drawn.



We must conclude that this looks like a true dualism: it ends in the assumption of two opposite principles, of which the one is not reduced to the other.

(4) However, at the outset of his report of the doctrine on the ultimate principles Sextus wrote as follows[137].

(261) ἔνθεν κινηθεὶς ὁ Πυθαγόρας ἀρχὴν ἔφησεν εἶναι τῶν ὄντων τὴν μονάδα, ἧς κατὰ μετοχὴν ἕκαστον τῶν ὄντων ἓν λέγεται · καὶ ταύτην κατ' αὐτότητα μὲν ἑαυτῆς νοουμένην μονάδα νοεῖσθαι, ἐπισυντεθεῖσαν δ'ἑαυτῇ καθ' ἑτερότητα ἀποτελεῖν τὴν καλουμένην ἀόριστον δυάδα διὰ τὸν μηδεμίαν τῶν ἀριθμητῶν καὶ ὡρισμένων δυάδων εἶναι τὴν αὐτήν, πάσας δὲ κατὰ μετοχὴν αὐτῆς δυάδας νενοῆσθαι.

"Pythagoras, moved by these considerations, declared that the One is the principle of existing things by participation in which each of the existing things is called one; and this when conceived in its self-identity is conceived as One, but when, in its otherness, it is added to itself *it creates the "Indefinite Dyad"*, so called because it is not any one of the numbered and definite dyads but they all are conceived as dyads through their participation in it"[138].

[137] *Adv. math.* X, 261.

[138] Transl. by R. G. Bury (slightly adapted). Cf. my *Pythagoras and Early Pythagoreanism*, 209.

This presentation of the two principles is curious enough. However strange it may seem to us, the second Principle is so to speak *taken back into the First*, the One being considered under two aspects, first "according to its self-identity", next "according to otherness". Under the first aspect it is thought of as one, under the other it "achieves" or "realizes" the Indefinite Dyad. "Was then the otherness implicated in the essence of the One?" one might feel inclined to ask. A very difficult question indeed. The author of the passage tends to answer it in the affirmative. "*When the Monad is added to itself* according to (its) otherness", he says. That is, he does regard the one not only in its oneness but somehow makes a distinction in it so that it comes to "achieve" or "realize" the Dyad. Notice that *the One* is not said to be itself a duality. But it can be regarded under the aspect of the ἕτερον, and under this aspect it is found to "achieve" or "realize" the Dyad. Thus, the Two-ness is *derived* from the essence of the One: somehow the Dyad qua principle of indefiniteness is found to be implicated in the First Principle.

(5) In this tendency to giving a monistic explanation of the doctrine of the ultimate principles Sextus does not stand by himself: he appears to be only the exponent of a tradition which can at least be traced back to the 2nd century B.C., but is probably older. Here follows the text quoted by Alexander Polyhistor (first cent. B.C.) from "Pythagorean writings"[139].

Ἀρχὴν μὲν ἁπάντων μονάδα· ἐκ δὲ τῆς μονάδος ἀόριστον δυάδα ὡς ἂν ὕλην τῇ μονάδι αἰτίῳ ὄντι ὑποστῆναι · ἐκ δὲ τῆς μονάδος καὶ τῆς ἀορίστου δυάδος τοὺς ἀριθμούς.

"The principle of all things is the Monad. Springing from this Monad the indefinite Dyad serves as a material substrate to the Monad, which is cause. From the Monad, then, and the indefinite Dyad spring the Numbers".

Here, certainly a century before Alexander, the monistic interpretation of the theory of the two ultimate principles is an accomplished fact.

Problems implied in the texts

A number of problems are implied in these texts. To begin with, what does it mean when Aristotle says that, since the Forms are the cause of the other things, according to Plato "the elements of the Forms" had to be the elements of all things?—By the "elements of the Forms" he obviously meant the two ultimate principles, the One and the indefinite

[139] Diog. Laert. VIII 25; deV., *Greek Phil.* III, no. 1279a. Here further literature is mentioned.

Dyad, here referred to as the Great-and-small. From these two principles, he says, Plato derived his Numbers, i.e. the ideal Numbers to which, as we found in Theophrastus, the multiplicity of the Ideas were reduced. And since in their turn visible things depend on the Ideas, the One and the indefinite Dyad would appear to be ultimately the principles of all things, directly of the intelligible, indirectly of the visible. Is that what Aristotle means, and has it to be accepted as a correct rendering of Plato's thought?

Two points have to be observed. First, the above rendering is by no means absurd from the point of view of logic. In order to explain the multiplicity of intelligible being (the Forms) Plato needed an indefinite principle next to the One. Moreover, that he did accept such a principle can be seen in the *Sophistes*, where the genus of the ἕτερον makes its appearance next to and together with that of ταὐτόν, both these genera plus those of motion and rest being so to speak given together with the ὄν. Logically speaking one might say that the four other genera are *implied* in the concept of being; ontologically speaking—and certainly Plato was as much concerned with ontology as he was with logic—one must say that the ἕτερον is of the same level as the ὄν, which means that both are of the level of *intelligible being*. Obviously the Indefinite had its function there.

This much, then, is certain. The only thing we have to add is: that the function of the Indefinite is by no means confined to the intelligible level. The *Philebus* taught us explicitly that the *ápeiron* had its function with regard to visible things, so that we came to denote it as a dyad *underlying* the αἰσθητά, in the figure drawn provisionally a few pages earlier marked by the sign of ** quite at the bottom of the whole system. As a supplement to that figure we might now add the same sign at the top of it. Only—*where* precisely have we to place it: immediately under the One, or rather next to it, at the same level?

Which means: did Plato actually conceive his two principles in the sense of a true dualism, or was he rather inclined never to rank the Indefinite on a level with the One but always to place it below it? The latter view seems to be somewhat enigmatically expressed in the passage of Sextus, *Adv. Math.* X, 261 (quoted above, under 4), where we found the One considered under two aspects, first in itself, next with the addition of ... *itself* to it, so that καθ' ἑτερότητα it "achieved" the two-ness.

If this somewhat queer distinction recalls any text of Plato, it will be the *Parmenides*, where the ἓν ἕν—the one that is just one and does not admit of any predication—is distinguished from the ἓν ὄν, the one that *is* and by its very being is liable to any predication applicable to an ὄν. This much is certain, Plato knew perfectly well that on the assumption of just one Principle which is one, and one only, it is not possible to explain the

whole of Reality in its multiplicity. He must have seen, then, that it is necessary to assume a second and indefinite principle. Whether or not he taught explicitly that this second principle as such is not of the same level as the First but somehow secondary to it, we cannot tell; but we can understand that his whole way of thinking tends in this direction. Therefore, when later generations explained his doctrine of the ultimate principles in a monist sense, we can only say that they worked out what was at least implied in it.

It is not the case that the monistic interpretation which we found in Sextus, *M.* X 261, and in Alexander Polyhistor, was influenced by any originally Pythagorean monism. Early Pythagoreanism was not a monistic philosophy. On the contrary, it started with a dualist explanation of the world, *péras* opposite to *ápeiron* being at the top of its double list of principles[140]. If at a later stage Pythagoreanism turned to monism, this development is rather due to the influence of Plato's doctrine which apparently was understood in this sense.

Thus, while reflecting on Aristotle's text quoted under (1), we have dealt at the same time with a few problems presented by the texts quoted under the nos. (4) and (5). Moreover, our reflections led us to correcting the figure drawn provisionally when we had to deal with the Hermodorus- and *Philebus*-texts. In answering the first question raised above we found that Aristotle's text, however puzzling it might seem at the first glance, turns out to be meaningful and consistent: the One and the indefinite Dyad are found to be actually the ultimate principles of all things, an explanation which, however, does not necessarily end in dualism but rather shows a tendency towards monism. Moreover, we were able to specify the function of the Indefinite Principle up to a certain degree: it appeared not to be confined to the level of sensible things, but to operate already on the first level of Being. No wonder, when it is thus found to be a Principle stretching from the highest level of Being unto its lowest, that we shall find it also in the intermediate sphere, that is, Soul.

For Plato, Soul occupies in fact an intermediate place between Intelligible Being and sensible things. It is emphatically declared to be of an order superior to anything bodily[141]. On the other hand, though in the division of *Phaedo* 79a it belonged to things invisible[142], it was not

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[140] The συστοιχία, mentioned as early Pythagorean in Arist., *Metaph.* A 5, 986a23-29; deV., *Greek Phil.* I, no. 42. See also deV., *Pythagoras and Early Pyth.*, 204ff.

[141] See above, p. 171. To *Laws* V 726e-727a, where the Soul is declared to be "the most divine" of all things man possesses, I have to add here *Laws* X 892a-d which teaches the ontological priority of Soul to Body (deV., *Greek Phil.* I, no. 388).

[142] *Supra*, p. 161.

identified there with τὸ ἀεὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ἔχον, it was said to be something "more similar" to that order of being than to the body, and to be "akin" to it[143]. Now according to the *Timaeus*[144] the Demiurge, who obviously represents divine *Noûs*, creates the Soul by mixing Being together with two opposite principles, Identity and Difference (ταὐτόν and θάτερον), here introduced as "elements" of the mixture[145]. One of the elements, θάτερον, is of a resistant nature: the Demiurge had to *force* it into the union with ταὐτόν, doing violence to it[146]. Yet, this resisting element was necessary to the whole: without it, Soul would not be able to perform its proper function, that of knowing, and of "knowing"—up to a certain degree—also what is *under* its own level, by perceiving bodily things. In order to fulfil its proper function it must be all-pervading; hence, it must take part in both kinds of Being, the ἀμέριστον and the περὶ τὰ σώματα μεριστόν, and in both the opposite elements, ταὐτόν as well as θάτερον.

Sameness and Difference as present in the soul must be somehow related to the first Principles, the One and the *Apeiron*. By what kind of relationship? Obviously they are not identical with them, but they do depend on them, representing those First Principles on the level of Soul. Just as Sameness, without being identical with the One, is a manifestation of the One on the Soul-level, so in the resistant element of Difference the *Apeiron* is present to the Soul.

This much then on the meaning of Aristotle's first-quoted text and the implications involved in it.

The other problem I wished to raise[147] is of a different nature. Several Platonists have been rather sceptical about any later testimonies on Plato's so-called unwritten doctrine. In principle they were not willing to accept anything but what they found in the dialogues, and testimonies such as I cited above seemed to them alien to the authentic Platonism known to us from the author's own works. Aristotle, by nature quite a different spirit, was uncongenial to the master's thought. He was not a man to understand and render that thought correctly: he misinterprets and distorts. This we can prove in several cases.

There is a good part of truth in what these scholars say. In fact, Aristotle was uncongenial to Plato's thought. This can be seen im-

[143] *Phaedo* 79b: ὁμοιότερον ἄρα ψυχὴ σώματός ἐστι τῷ ἀειδεῖ, τὸ δὲ τῷ ὁρατῷ. 79d2: ὡς συγγενὴς οὖσα αὐτοῦ (sc. intelligible Being, which is "pure, eternal and always the same").

[144] 35a-b.

[145] Cf. *Tim.* 47e.

[146] 35b1: τὴν θατέρου φύσιν δύσμεικτον οὖσαν εἰς ταὐτὸν συναρμόττων βίᾳ.

[147] *Supra*, p. 200.

mediately in his criticism of the theory of the Ideas. Nevertheless, would he simply have *invented* a whole set of doctrines, such as that of the ultimate principles, that of the ideal Numbers and of the equation of the One to the Good, and attributed them to Plato?—This seems to me incredible. It is too easy a way to get rid of well-attested matters which may seem difficult to us but on careful inspection will be found to be neither absurd nor contrary to what is in the dialogues. They rather clarify certain difficult passages and at the end give us a more complete view of the whole of Plato's thought.

However, I do not think there is any good reason for admitting that the whole set of doctrines referred to in the above-mentioned texts was taught by Plato from the beginning of his career up to the end, and that these doctrines were the essence of his philosophy, rather than that which was written in the dialogues[148]. I think these doctrines belong to Plato's later years, and I have good grounds for this conviction. It is exclusively in the later dialogues, after the *Republic*, the *Phaedrus* and the *Theaetetus*, that a few passages are found which point in the direction of the so-called ἄγραφα, the only close parallel being *Philebus* 24-25. In the *Republic*, where the First Principle is mentioned and carefully set apart from all other intelligible Being which is characterized as "*similar* to the Good" but never to be identified with it[149], the Good being above it as its ultimate Cause[150], no reference is found to a second Principle. It is lacking there as much as anywhere except in the definitely later dialogues.

The Heidelberg colloquy of 1967

I cannot either speak or write about these things without remembering the Colloquy held with the chief representatives of the Tübingen School and other German scholars in a place near Heidelberg, September 1967[151]. I had the privilege of taking part in it. The veterans of the party, the professors Gadamer and Schadewaldt, who patronized the Colloquy, started immediately by declaring that they wished to keep aloof from any talk about a "secret doctrine" of Plato's. "Dieser Unsinn sollte sogar

[148] This is the thesis brought forward by H. J. Kraemer in the volume *Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles*, published in the *Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Heidelberg 1959. The thesis was judiciously criticized by K. von Fritz, "Die philosophische Stelle im siebten platonischen Brief und die Frage der "esoterischen" Philosophie Platons", in *Phronesis* (1966), 117-153.

[149] 509a.

[150] 509b.

[151] The essential introductions held in that Colloquy were published in the volume *Idee und Zahl*, Studien zur platonischen Philosophie, hrsg. von H. G. Gadamer und W. Schadewaldt, Heidelberg 1968, mentioned above (ch. I, p. 28).

nicht genannt werden." (That was a hint H. J. Kraemer could apply to himself, and as a matter of fact, he did).—After Gadamer's presidential address H. J. Kraemer gave a long and elaborate introduction, so amazingly harmless that hardly anybody could be offended at it. He obviously wished to keep on safe ground[152]. However, there was something surprising in the way the veterans turned away from any idea of development in Plato's thought. They were in obvious reaction against the kind of *Entwicklungstheorie*, well-known from earlier German literature, which in fact behaved now and then rather naively. Quite rightly Schadewaldt remarked that, whenever some particular thought or doctrine does not occur in some particular dialogue, this fact is not an indication by which we could conclude that, *ergo*, Plato did not yet have that thought or hold that doctrine by the time he wrote that dialogue. "No author of some significance puts everything he thinks or knows at some particular moment in the book he happens to write just then. Thus, if some theory found in a later work of Plato does not occur in any earlier dialogue, that does not prove at all that the author did not hold that theory in that earlier period of his life. The question is, whether he had any reason to mention that theory in one of his earlier dialogues. Perhaps he had not, and his silence on the subject was due to the fact that in his earlier writings he was dealing with other subjects, not related to this particular matter."

The remark was correct in itself. Only, we would be wrong if we found a reason in it to reject a priori the possibility of any development in Plato's thought. Is it probable that a thinker like Plato—a man who is almost a symbol of an untiring intellectual self-criticism, always asking himself new questions, always ready to tackle new problems, to reject former solutions and begin again—, is it probable that such a thinker had all and everything of his later thought present in his mind from the beginning? I do not think so. On the contrary: this is inhuman. Man and his thought are a living being, and a living being is not static.

Conclusion

Most certainly there is a growth in Plato's thought. That in the earlier Socratic dialogues, such as the *Laches* and *Hippias Minor*, the *Protagoras* and the *Gorgias*, there is either not a trace of or at least no explicit mention of the theory of the Ideas, is certainly not merely a question of literary form or fiction. That in the *Phaedo* and the *Cratylus* the theory of

[152] So it might seem to a reader of Kr.'s work *APA* (1959). However, he had made his "Retractations" (1964), referred to *Supra* (ch. I, p. 26).

the Ideas is emphatically introduced, and is introduced in the name of Socrates; that it is fully present in the central books of the *Republic*, in the *Symposium* as well as in the *Phaedrus*, is again not so much a matter of literary form or fiction, but rather a σημεῖον that in the ripe years of his teaching in the Academy the theory of the Ideas had reached its definite form in the master's mind. When in the *Phaedrus* the method of diaeresis is for the first time outlined, a method which we find applied in such later dialogues as the *Sophistes* and *Politicus*, we have certainly no reason to suppose that the outline of this method was already present to the author's mind in the days when he wrote his first Socratic dialogues. Nor have we any reason to suppose that a conception such as that of the World-Soul, which does not explicitly occur before the *Philebus* and *Timaeus*, was already consciously present to the author's mind when he wrote the *Phaedo* or the *Republic*.

As for the theory of the ultimate Principles and that of ideal Numbers, let us first notice that neither of them is incompatible with the theory of the Ideas as it was conceived at first and introduced in particular in the *Phaedo* and the *Cratylus*[153]. But apparently neither of these doctrines belonged to the first conception of the theory of the Ideas, nor is there a trace of them to be found in the central books of the *Republic*, though there, if anywhere, the author would have had a reason to speak of such important themes, if they had been present to his mind.

Both these doctrines were, I think, a later development of the theory of the Ideas. I do not find any reason to suppose that Plato held them by the time he wrote the *Theaetetus*. But I do think that not so long afterwards, in the days when he was working at the *Parmenides* and *Sophistes*, the theory of the ultimate Principles and that of ideal Numbers ripened in his mind. For these dialogues first bear the character of a fundamental and intense intellectual self-criticism, of a radical re-thinking and re-construction of the metaphysics and theory of knowledge of his preceding years; moreover, they show an intense concern about both the logical and metaphysical problems implied in the phenomena of error, negative judgment and multiplicity. It is in this context that the necessity of an Indefinite Principle must have imposed itself on Plato's mind.

It was in these later years also that he turned his interest to the problems of how the visible world came into being, and of the condition of man-living-in-a-body. It is in this context that the theory of the World-Soul comes in, and a more positive appreciation of the faculty of sight in man.

[153] *Phaedo* 100a-101d; DeV., *Greek Phil.* I, no. 266a-b. *Cratylus* 439c-440b; *Greek Phil.* no. 268a.

In this sense, I think, there has been a real growth and "development" in Plato's thought. In this development I do find room for the doctrines of ultimate Principles and of ideal Numbers. As to the theory of two ultimate Principles, however "dualistic" it may present itself to us in such a text as Aristotle's in *Metaph.* A 6 or that of Sextus, *Adv. math.* X, 270-276, a more profound reflection makes it clear to us that an actual dualism is not in line with Plato's thought. On the contrary, we had to realize that Plato's thought naturally tended in the direction of ranking the One over his whole system of Reality and placing the indispensable Indefinite Principle immediately under it, just as it had to be at the bottom of the whole as well.

IV. *Pre-existent Matter?*

There is one other aspect of our problem. Theologians, in particular those who are well-acquainted with early Christian literature, frequently speak about Plato's dualism, referring to his supposed doctrine of a pre-existent "matter" which in their opinion was "coequal" or "coeternal" with God. This is, for instance, how shortly after the year 180 Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, describes Plato's doctrine[154]. His argument is as follows.

(1) If God is without beginning and Matter is without beginning, God is not the Creator of everything.

(2) In that case, God does not hold an absolute monarchy.

(3) That which is without beginning, is without change. Thus, Matter is unchangeable and equal to God.

(4) Would it be anything particular, if God made the world out of a pre-existing matter? Does not also a human artist make whatever he wishes from some given material? The power of God, however, is revealed in that He makes whatever He likes from non-being, i.e. from just nothing.

Not so long after Theophilus the author of the *Cohortatio ad Graecos*, an anonymous writing from the first half of the third century, handed down to us under the name of Justin, polemizes against Plato in the same way[155]. To what in Plato's dialogues does this picture of "Plato's doctrine" correspond?

Not, I dare say, to that third principle which in the *Timaeus* is introduced when the author is going to deal with those things in the visible world which are not due to the creative work of divine Reason (*Noûs*).

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[154] *Ad Autolycum* II 4.
[155] *Cohort. ad Graecos*, ch. 22.

Most things in the universe, so the author declares, were brought about by Reason, and certainly Reason, personified in the figure of the Demiurge, was the primary and ruling Cause. But there are also secondary causes, which in themselves are destitute of reason. Of these accessory causes the author says[156] that "the God uses them as subservient in achieving the best result that is possible". A certain limitation in the creative work of *Noûs* seems to be implied. And this is actually what Plato meant. For a few lines further[157] he describes the genesis of this universe as "a mixed result of the combination of Necessity and Reason". Here again we hear that "Reason *overruled Necessity*, by persuading it, to guide *the greatest part of the things* that come into being towards that which is best. In that way and on that principle this universe was fashioned in the beginning by the victory of reasonable persuasion over Necessity".—Once again, the victory appears not to be complete: there is, so we must infer, a part of irrational elements working within the cosmos.

In this context, then, the author feels compelled to make a fresh start: the two principles posited at the outset[158]—intelligible Being, which is always the same, and on the other hand "that which always *becomes*, but never *is*"—are no longer sufficient; a third principle has to be added. It is described as "the receptacle—as it were, the nurse—of all Becoming". A ὡς is added in the very description, to underline the metaphorical character of the language. It is to be noticed that in the immediately preceding lines (48d) our whole passage had been introduced by reemphasizing the character of εἰκότες λόγοι—a, rationally speaking, inadequate account, which in its form of expression had to be taken with certain reservations.

Unfortunately, this indication, made by the author himself, has not always been followed, either by ancient or by modern interpreters. The "receptacle", which by the author is described as the *space within which* the whole process of genesis takes place, was only too often understood *as the stuff from which* becoming things were made. That is what in later Greek authors is called τὸ ἐξ οὗ: "matter" qua immanent principle, "causa materialis", to speak Aristotelian language. But this is not what Plato had in mind. His comparison of the "receptacle" to a matrix[159] should be clear enough for us; for we know that the Ancients took the

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[156] *Tim.* 46c7-d1.
[157] *Tim.* 48a.
[158] 27d-28a.
[159] *Tim.* 50d.

process of human generation exactly in this way, that the womb offers just *the space within which* the seed develops into a human being[160].

That Aristotle in his terminology refers to the χώρα as ὕλη, is understandable enough. For in fact, the receptacle which had no qualities of its own, obviously was an exponent of that Indefinite Principle which by Aristotle was called "matter". It does not follow that, *ergo*, the receptacle was conceived as an immanent principle, nor even that Aristotle took it in that sense. He just classed it under the ἄπειρον, and consciously "corrected" Plato's conception of "matter" by his own concept of ὕλη as an immanent principle.

However, the introduction of a third principle, described as Receptacle or "space" is not the only thing that gave rise to the frequently repeated dictum that Plato taught a pre-existent matter from which the Demiurge "created" the world. In so far as those who ever said that or still aver it do so on this basis, we have to reject their interpretation. But they may have another passage in mind. It is *Timaeus* 52d-53b. Here we find the contents of the Receptacle described as a kind of chaos, existing before the Demiurge created the ordered world: there are unequal and unbalanced powers, an irregular motion, a vague disordered mass, without measure and proportion. It bears "some vestiges" of the elements,—but definite elements could not exist before "the God gave it a distinct configuration by means of forms and numbers".

What are we to think about this pre-existing chaos?

One thing at any rate is clear: for Plato time was linked up with the visible world. Together with this world the Demiurge made Time, "a moving likeness of eternity"[161]. "Before" the world there was no time. Thus it makes no sense to speak of anything existing "before" the cosmos did exist, nor can the creation of the cosmos itself be conceived as an event happening in time[162].

All this strictly refers us back to the remark on the character of εἰκότες λόγοι. It means that we would be wrong in taking the reference to a pre-existing chaos literally. This can only involve us in hopeless contradictions. What Plato meant by stressing the εἰκὼς λόγος-character of our passage is: that, anyhow, a likeness must not be taken for a historical

[160] I am finding myself here in agreement with Fr. Solmsen, both in his earlier work, *Aristotle's System of the Physical World.* A comparison with his predecessors (1960), 41-44, and in his Lecture *Plato and Science* (1977), mentioned above (ch. I, p. 51). J. N. Findlay too understands the third principle of the *Timaeus* in the same sense. Guthrie, on the other hand, by taking the term ἐκμαγεῖον as suggesting a different aspect of the χώρα, finds in Plato's material principle a double meaning. See my ch. V, p. 145. (Note of 1982).

[161] *Tim.* 37d.

[162] This applies also to *Tim.* 30a3-6.

fact. Thus, the "pre-existing chaos" proves to be a kind of byproduct of metaphorical speech. Plato used this way of speaking deliberately and left the reader not unwarned[163].

He had not to wait until the 20th century to be understood according to his own indications. The second century Christian Apologists were somewhat too simple-minded to understand the form of the εἰκὼς λόγος. But Origen was profound enough. He understood it perfectly well, and he had his followers in later Antiquity.

In our days it is Cornford who, on the whole, comments well on the passage. I think he is right when concluding that Plato did not reduce the body of the universe to mere extension, but admitted that it "contains motions and active powers which are not instituted by the divine Reason, and are perpetually producing undesirable effects"[164]. He was certainly not right in identifying the Demiurge with "the *Noûs* of the World-Soul". Such a suggestion could be made only by a person who wishes *a priori* either to deny or to ignore the hierarchical character of Plato's ontology. However, Plato was Plato, and not a 20th-century Cambridge or Oxford scholar. When the Demiurge is said to *create* Soul, when the Star-Souls and the World-Soul are explicitly ranked at a level inferior to that of "the God" himself, we have to follow the indication. What the Demiurge creates is *eo ipso* eternal and divine; what is made by the "created gods" is perishable and imperfect. How, then, could a created god be identical with the Demiurge himself? Plato was not such a confused thinker.

Again, Cornford is perfectly right in saying that those things in the universe which are not brought about by divine Reason, in Plato's view could not be ascribed to "matter"; for according to Plato "matter" as such could not be a cause, only a soul could be. Of which soul have we to think? Can it be said that all evil occurring in the cosmos was caused by "the irrational element in the World-Soul", which then would be identical with the ἕτερον, the irrational element in the Soul-mixture?

I am rather reluctant to follow this interpretation,—because, after all, the ἕτερον was "forced" by the Demiurge to be mixed up in the Soul-mixture. Was it Plato's intention to admit that the ἕτερον remained a more or less resistant element within the World-soul, in the sense that only a part of it was "persuaded" to follow the lead of Reason? I am

[163] Again I find myself here in agreement with J. N. Findlay (1974). Not altogether with Fr. Solmsen who, though well aware of the εἰκὼς λόγος character of Plato's physics, thinks that we have to take his talk about a "pre-cosmic order" quite seriously: it is a remnant of pre-socratic thinking in Plato. I shall explain in a brief additional note that in this matter Solmsen's interpretation does not hold.

[164] F. M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology*, London ²1948, 176.

more inclined to think of subordinate "evil spirits" in the world. No doubt Plato admitted their existence and could account for that belief on rational grounds.

However this may be, the Demiurge himself can only stand for a *transcendent Noûs* which as such is perfect and of the level of intelligible Being. This is above Soul and depends immediately on the First Principle, which itself was said to be "beyond Being" and its ultimate ground. Such is Plato's view of Reality: a hierarchical order, going up to the Good or the One and ending in the visible world, which is moulded after the example of intelligible Being, while Soul is intermediate between the two but by its nature nearer to that which is above it.

It can be said, of course, that none the less, since the evil things in the world cannot be reduced to divine Reason, there remains some kind of basic dualism in Plato's theory of Reality as a whole. This is true up to a certain extent. Only—if this be called "dualism", I am afraid it is impossible to offer any adequate explanation of the universe which would not be dualist. I think after all that Plato spoke not unworthily about those difficult problems, not even from a Christian point of view. It has to be remembered here that also in that later form of Platonism which in the third century A.D. was created by Plotinus, no substantiality whatever was attributed to evil or its ultimate source. In this Plotinus was a faithful follower of Plato. If it is still frequently repeated that Plotinus made "matter" the cause of evil, one has just to remember that for these philosophers "matter" was not a substantial "something": it was defined by *the complete absence of anything positive or "good"*.

Thus, a Christian thinker like Augustine, who came from Gnosticism (which *did* conceive of evil as a substance), could find a satisfactory solution of the problem in Neoplatonist thought: he could feel liberated here from the error of Manichean dualism. In this he knew and understood Platonism better than many present-day philosophers and theologians.

Note on the so-called "pre-cosmic order" in Plato's physics

The old tradition of assigning to Plato the belief that a God made this world from a pre-existing matter, is rather tough: not only early Christians understood it so, but up to our own days the same interpretation is still valid and even appears to be prevailing. A. Mansion in his excellent *Introduction à la physique aristotélienne* (1946) took it over without any misgivings, and in 1960 Fr. Solmsen (*Aristotle's System of the Physical World*, 49f.) presented it in a renewed and rather emphatic form. Solmsen who had vigorously underlined the novelty of Plato's Ideas as a totally different kind of principles after the post-Parmenidean cosmological theories, and again had emphasized the novelty of the mathematical character of the cosmic order in Plato's conception, including the reduction of the elements to stereometrical bodies and ultimately to triangles, was struck by the description of the contents of the receptacle given in *Tim.* 52d-53b. This description of the "Nurse of Becoming" as being made moist and fiery and receiving the characters (μορφάς) of earth and air, and "undergoing" all the other "affections" (πάθη) that go with these, so that it appears infinitely diversified (παντοδαπή) to look at; moreover, that it is said to be filled with unequal and unbalanced powers (δυνάμεις), by which it is "swayed unevenly and shaken", so that the receptacle itself with it contents are irregularly swayed and shaken too—all this reminds Solmsen too much of what in his mind were "similar descriptions" in Pre-socratic physicists. Those thinkers conceived of a pre-cosmic order of things, of "elements drifting asunder and separate", which seem to him to differ from Plato's description of "Nature in its pre-cosmic condition" in this only that for Plato the separation of the elements does not of itself form the Cosmos (Solmsen, 50). For in that section on the receptacle he "refers to the elements as existing and moving even before the heaven (i.e. the cosmos) was fashioned out of them (53aff.)".

The discussion might seem to be hopeless. For does not Plato speak of "the four kinds" (τὰ τέτταρα γένη) being shaken by the recipient as a kind of winnowing-basket, separating the most unlike kinds farthest apart from one another, and thrusting the most alike closest together? Before that winnowing process, so he says, "all these kinds were without proportion and measure", πάντα ταῦτ' ἔχειν ἀλόγως καὶ ἀμέτρως.

So there were no elements "before", might we conclude, stating that Solmsen said too much in speaking of the existence of "physical elements" *before* the Demiurge took up his work of ordering them by means of Forms and Numbers, εἴδεσί τε καὶ ἀριθμοῖς. Were there then any "physical elements" at all before the God gave them their shape and order?

Following Plato's text we read (after the ἀλόγως καὶ ἀμέτρως): "But at the time when the ordering of the universe was taken in hand—first fire, then water, earth and air—things had indeed some vestiges of their own nature (ἴχνη αὐτῶν ἄττα), but were altogether in such a condition as we should expect for anything when deity is absent from it. While, then, things were in that condition the god began to give them a definite shape by means of Forms and Numbers."

In *what* condition were they before? Those who advocate the pre-cosmic order thesis can always point to the ἴχνη αὐτῶν, the "vestiges" of their own nature which those "things" that were not yet "things" are

said to have had before being ''shaped''. So they will explain: there were ''physical elements'' existing in rather a chaotic condition; yet, somehow, they wore the traces of what they had to become. The deity made them ''more beautiful and perfect''. He improved on a pre-existing order.

However, those who take it strictly that ''all those things'' (πάντα ταῦτα) were without proportion and measure (ἔχειν ἀλόγως καὶ ἀμέτρως) will say: ''Look, those things were no ''things'' at all, for they were formless, that is, indefinite.'' In spite of ''the kind of traces''—apparently vague indications of what they not yet were but had to become by the creative work of the god—they are explicitly said to be in a desolate state: as long as the presence of the god is lacking, one cannot expect them to have any definite character which would make them worthy of being called ''something''.

Are we too severe? I think not. For again we read in Plato who, after a long account of the physical order, at the end of which also the works of a mechanical cause come in, subservient to the work of Reason, concludes as follows (69b): ''As was said at the outset, these things were in disorder and the god introduced into them all every kind of measure in every respect in which it was possible for each one to be in harmonious proportion both with itself and with all the rest. For at first they were without any such proportion, save by mere chance, nor was there anything deserving to be called by the names we now use—fire, water etc.; but all these he first set in order, and then framed out of them this universe.''

Cornford, whose translation I gratefully used, notes to the words ὅσον μὴ τύχῃ, ''in so far as it was not by chance''. The reference is to those transient semblances of order which might occur without design in the chaos described in 53a by the mere attraction of like to like'' (the winnowing process). That is then the ''vestiges'' that more or less look like what the elements had to be.

This was the evidence. I conclude as follows. Plato did speak of a pre-existing chaos, he did not speak of a pre-existing order (cosmos). Order was made by ''the God'', by means of Forms and Numbers; not an ''improved'' order, of a complementary character, by making ''more beautiful and perfect'' what was already orderly before, but just order.

Consensus will not easily be reached on this matter, because Plato by his colourful presentation offered a ground for overinterpretation to those who came after him. However, I think this much may be said for sure: though in fact he offered *some* ground for construction a pre-cosmic-order theory, he did not offer a sufficient ground for it. On the contrary, at the end he excluded it altogether.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PLOTINUS' IMAGE OF MAN

Its relation to Plato and later neoplatonists *

In the treatise on the three basic hypostases (*Enn.* V 1), after expounding his own theory, Plotinus turns to Plato[1], and quoting what is known as the Master's Second Letter[2], concludes[3]: 'Now these theories are not new and this is not the first time they were stated. It has been done long before, only not in a developed form. My here proposed theory is an interpretation of them. Plato's own writings testify to the antiquity of these doctrines'.

By these words Plotinus certainly refers primarily to the theory of the springing of archetypal Being from the First, and next, as another circle of light, of Soul from *Noûs*, which is both primary Intellect and intelligible Being. However, for Plotinus the metaphysic of the three hypostases doubtless implied a particular view of man and the world as well, since the physical cosmos was conceived as an ultimate reflection of divine Being penetrating the darkness surrounding it[4], while man appeared to be a 'both-together', on the one hand the body which is congenial with the physical world and part of it, on the other hand the soul, which springs from divine Being and naturally has to rule and regulate the body[5]. Hence, the *káthodos* of the individual soul to a particular human body is not as such 'a fall' or a cause of evil[6]. Sure, it may easily become so, since the soul risks to attach itself too much to its body and thus lose the indispensable contact with that which is above it[7]. If that would hap-

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* A revised version of my article ''Plotinus' Image of Man. Its relationship to Plato as well as to later Neoplatonism'', which appeared in *Images of Man in Ancient and Medieval Thought, Studia G. Verbeke ... dicata*, ed. C. Laga *et al.*, Louvain 1976, 147-168.

[1] *Enn.* V, 1, 8,1ff.

[2] Plato, *Epist.* 312e.

[3] *Enn.* V 1, 8.10-14.

[4] *Enn.* III 9, 3.7-16; see also IV 3, 10.5-9 (the same image) and II 3, 18.8-22 (the world arising from Soul as a perpetual image).

[5] *Enn.* IV 8, 3.21-31; cf. IV 3, 10.20-22 (the Soul by its nature is master of the bodies, so as to bring them into existence and to the state it wants to give them).

[6] *Enn.* IV 8, 4.1-23, 28-35; cf. IV 8, 2.37-39 on the two kinds of 'providence' (see my word of introduction in *Greek Philosophy* III, no. 1376); IV 8, 5.24-30.

[7] *Enn.* IV 8, 4.12-33. The πτερορρυοῦσαι is obviously a reminiscence of *Phaedr.* 246c, 248c. The state of the soul that, by attaching itself to things here, has forgotten 'God its Father' and lost the knowledge about its origin, is described in *Enn.* V 1, 1.

pen—and in fact it does quite frequently—the soul evidently will be seriously harmed in its essential being. In that case, indeed, the *káthodos* has become a fall and the body a prison[8]. Only, this is not naturally so. It has turned out this way, because the soul turned to the wrong side. Certainly it had to take care of the body entrusted to it, but it could fulfil this task duly only when keeping in touch with that divine Being which is its origin[9]. The term τὸ συναμφότερον, used by Plato both in the *Phaedo* and, more particularly, in the *Timaeus*, is used by Plotinus as well[10].

Plotinus repeatedly raised the question of 'What is man', not only in the treatise that figures right at the beginning of the *Enneads*, though in fact it was written almost at the end of the author's career[11], but also explicitly in VI 7 which belongs chronologically in the middle group[12], and hardly less clearly in the still earlier treatise VI 4[13]. Moreover, in the long treatises on the soul, IV 3-5, particularly in 3, the author is continuously concerned with the relationship of soul and body, and thus with man as a whole. And what about such treatises as that on the *káthodos* of the soul (IV 8) and the one on immortality (IV 7)? Both these treatises were among the earliest Plotinus wrote and obviously it is with man he was dealing there. The same applies to the treatise *On Fate* (III 1), the third in the chronological list, in which, against the Stoic view, he defends the free will of man as a rational being. The treatise III 2, *On Providence*, which belongs to the last group, is concerned with the same problem. Here the author underlines rather emphatically that man has to perform his own individual task and within the framework of the cosmic order functions as an independent cause.

In VI 7 the problem is raised of whether man, who in this world is essentially a being provided with sense-perception and possessing the organs necessary to this faculty, was so in the intelligible Archetype already. If the question were answered in the negative, it would follow that man was not essentially a sensitive being; if in the positive, one

[8] *Enn.* IV 8, 4.21-28.

[9] *Enn.* IV 8, 3.25ff.

[10] Frequently in the treatise I 1, chs. 5-7; for man also in VI 7, 5.2f. and II 3, 15.24; for sensible things, similar to 'man here', e.g. in VI 7, 4.22 and VI 3, 7.14. In the treatise I 1 man in a body is also referred to as τὸ μεμιγμένον. So in I 1, 3.22. The expression is explained by such a description as given in I 1, 4.14ff.: ψυχὴν διαπεφοιτηκυῖαν δι' ὅλου ὡς διαπεπλέχθαι, and in the same chapter, a few lines further on, (ψυχὴ) ὡς εἶδος ἐν ὕλῃ ἔσται ἐν τῷ σώματι. In the same treatise man in a body is also referred to as τὸ κοινόν (I 1, 5.2; I 1, 8.19 and 10.3) or as a σύνθετον (I 1, 11.1). In II 4, 2.11 a body in general is said to be a σύνθετον of matter and form.

[11] The treatise Τί τὸ ζῷον καὶ τίς ὁ ἄνθρωπος, *Enn.* I 1; in the chronological list No. 53 which is the last but one.

[12] No. 38.

[13] No. 22, the first of the middle group.

might conclude that apparently the archetypal man had sense-organs in view of man's life in a body, since in the intelligible order such organs would lack a proper function. Thus, the Archetype of man would be determined with regard to the soul's descending into physical existence. However, this would imply turning the relationship of the intelligible and the sensible order of being upside-down; for in fact, it is not being-in-a-body which constitutes eternal Being, not the γιγνόμενον, which gives its form and character to the ὄν, but the other way round, it is transcendent and eternal Being which gives its form and character to the γιγνόμενον. None the less, when in search of the intelligible, man has to start from the sensible thing. Hence we have to begin with the question of 'what is man-here'. It is the soul which makes this sensible man a living and thinking being. Is it possible then to define man by his soul? Or rather a soul using a body? Anyway, since a living being is a composite of a soul and a body, man-here cannot possibly be defined as a soul. He must be a συναμφότερον. 'Such a soul that came in such a matter because it is this, as it were in such a disposition also without a body: man; but in a body it formed according to itself another image of a man, making it in so far as the body was capable to receive it, just as the painter in his turn will make an image of this man still inferior to it'[14]. Thus, man-in-a-body, being an image of what man originally is, is in his form, his character and faculties less clear, more vague than the original. This applies to his senses and sense-perception as well. The original man who is superior to him will have both a more divine soul and clearer senses. But since the concrete man depends on him and up to a certain degree is conjoint with him, he will be illuminated by him.

What is remarkable in these chapters is that sense-perception is emphatically said to belong to the archetypal man. That is to say that in the intelligible order there is some kind of seeing and touching intelligible objects, a kind of perception of which ours is an imperfect image[15].

All this is no doubt a very Platonical way of thinking. It is not particularly intellectual nor spiritualistic. It does not disparage sense-perception nor deny its rôle as a starting-point or basis of human knowledge. Had Plotinus done so, he would have been unfaithful to the spirit of his Master who emphatically gave their due place to the senses,

[14] VI 7, 5.11-16.

[15] The problem of what the αἰσθητικόν could mean in the intelligible world is raised at the beginning of ch. 6; it is answered in ch. 7.24ff.: yonder, there is a direct grasping (ἀντίληψις) of intelligible objects, ἀσώματα, which in that case are the αἰσθητά, and our sense-perception here is more vague than that direct grasping yonder. See also the Arabic *Theologia* X 75-76, Engl. translation in *Plotini opera* ed. Henry-Schwyzer, vol. II, 449.

both in the *Theaetetus*[16] and in the *Timaeus*[17]. But he did not. What he does emphasize is that man can live at very different levels. Intelligible man, ὁ ἐν νῷ ἄνθρωπος, is primary man. But man in a body, who as such is 'the second man', may choose to live at the level of νοῦς, and in this case he will be a spiritual man, according to the level at which he lives. But he may also choose to live at the level of corporeal needs and desires. If he does so, Plotinus speaks of 'the third man': his soul is still a human soul and as such it will be illumined by 'the second man'[18].

In trying to understand this difficult chapter one must remember that elsewhere too Plotinus was concerned with the different levels at which Soul may live, also when incarnated in a human body. One may remember in particular the author's description given in *Enn.* IV, 3, 4.21-37[19].

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[16] Plato, *Theaet.* 184b-186d. The activity of the intellect (ἡ ψυχή) is rather strongly emphasized, but none the less, the intellect works on the basis of sense-data: 'The soul perceives by means of the senses' (184d), and it is by the reflection on sense-impressions that the intellect reaches truth (186d). Plotinus likewise rejects the Stoic idea of sense-perception as some kind of seal-impressions (ἐνσφραγίσεις ἢ τυπώσεις) in wax, and notices that, also in sense-perception, the process is rather 'like thinking', that is to say, essentially not passive but active (*Enn.* IV 3, 26.25-32). Plotinus does underline the cooperation of soul and body in sense-perception, a cooperation, however, like in crafts such as drilling or weaving, in which the craftsman has the leading part, while the material instruments are used by him. Thus the soul receives the impression made on the body, or it judges according to the impression produced on the body (IV 3, 26.1-8). Cf. I 1, 7.6-14, in which he begins by stating that the perception of the soul presupposes its connection with the body. Then he goes on stating emphatically that this community does not imply that the soul would share the πάθη of the body; its perception is ἀπαθῶς, a θεωρία of τύποι which are produced on the living being, and these τύποι, when they become the object of the soul's perception, are already intelligible.

In fact, Plotinus is finding himself here on the track of Aristotle's *Anal. post.* II 19. The matter is that, as soon as a 'something' is perceived, it is the intellect that is working, and the intellect can only work on νοητά. Thus, Aristotle concludes his account of the process of sense-perception in the final chapter of his *Analytics* by saying: καὶ γὰρ ἡ αἴσθησις οὕτω τὸ καθόλου ἐμποιεῖ. 'In this way sense-perception produces the universal in us' (100b5). Now the universal is admittedly a νοητόν. This then is 'produced in us' by αἴσθησις. Thus, αἴσθησις turns out to be some mental activity rather than just a passive impression. No doubt the process of knowledge started with that. But mere sense-impressions could produce only μνήμη and by frequent occurrence ἐμπειρία. As soon as the καθόλου comes in, a different faculty is at work. Aristotle still speaks of *aisthesis* as producing the universal in us. It is in this sense Plotinus could say that the τύποι, when they become the object of the soul's perception, are already νοητά.

Nor is he here at variance with Plato. He agrees perfectly with Plato who said in the above-cited passage of the *Theaetetus* that *the soul* is subject of perception and that it perceives things *by means of* the senses; thus, that truth is not reached in the παθήματα but in our reflection on them (186d). See also III 6, 1, which opens by declaring: 'we say that sense-perceptions are no πάθη, but ἐνέργειαι περὶ τὰ παθήματα καὶ κρίσεις'.

[17] 47a-c; Sight is the greatest blessing to man, since it led him to the knowledge of number, which is the basis of all scientific theory.

[18] VI 7, 6.13. See on this distinction between the 'second' and the 'third' man the periphrasis and comments of the Arabic *Theologia*, X 77-78, in Henry-Schwyzer II, 449.

[19] See my notes to this passage in *Greek Philosophy* III, no. 1373.

In an earlier treatise, VI 4 (No. 22 of the chronological list), the author speaks about the unity of the Soul. In fact, Soul is undivided, but it seems to divide itself to the benefit of the beings that receive it[20]. This rising of individuals separating from the one Soul and yet staying in it does not actually have a beginning: they were always. For Soul in its transcendency existed erelong and 'from the beginning'. The always arising beings approach it, seem to touch it and depend on it. Here[21] the question is raised: 'And we,—who are we? Are we that transcendent Soul, or are we that which approaches it and comes into being in time? Before being born as men in this world we were men yonder, different from what we are now, some of us gods, pure souls and Intellect linked with the whole of Being, parts of the Intelligible, not separated from it nor cut off, but belonging to the whole. And still now we are not cut off from it. But now, to that man another man has added himself, one who wished to exist and has found us, for we were not outside of the universe. Thus he placed himself round us and added himself to that man who each of us was before.—And so we have become that unity-of-two (τὸ συνάμφω), not man in his simplicity as we were before; and sometimes we are just that other whom we later took in addition, when that first man did not work any more and in a sense was not there'[22].

The last lines of this passage refer again to that state of man-here which was described in the opening chapter of V 1: the man who has got alienated from his origin by attaching himself to things here.

The next chapter of the treatise under discussion[23] gives an impressive description of how the mass of feelings in us—pleasures, desires, fears,—just like the people in a tumultuous assembly, can shout down our higher aspirations. It is only by getting 'the rabble within us' under control that one can come back to the Man he was, and live up to that standard. But another may not reach that level, at least not wholly and without interruption. He will be a mixture from the good he was and the bad he has become.

In the treatises II 1 (No. 40 in the chronological order) and II 3 (chronologically No. 52) Plotinus declares once more that man, beyond his association with a body, possesses a higher soul and that this is his true and real self[24]. The last-mentioned passage is the most explicit one and hence of a particular interest. However, the preceding one does contribute something noteworthy to the picture of Plotinus' image of

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[20] *Enn.* VI 4, 14.13-14.

[21] Ibid., 16ff.

[22] VI 4, 14.16-26, 29-31.

[23] VI 4, 15.18-40.

[24] II 1, 5.19-22; II 3, 9.6-31.

man. In II 1 he is speaking about man as a part of the physical universe. 'We', so he says, 'are formed by the soul given from the gods in heaven and heaven itself, and this soul governs our association with our bodies. The other soul, by which we are ourselves, is because of our well-being, not of our being. It comes when our body is already in existence, making only minor contributions from reasoning to our being'[25].

Two points must be noticed here. First, 'we' are spoken of in a double sense: 'we' are the συναμφότερον, and on the other hand, more truly so, 'we' are the higher soul which here is referred to as 'the other one'. Likewise, in the other passage (II 3, 9) Plotinus will conclude[26]: 'For every man is double, one of him is the συναμφότερον, and one of him is himself'. Second, man-in-a-body, say the compound, existed already when 'the other soul' comes to it. This is quite a noticeable feature, for in fact, this is not so much Plato's view in the *Timaeus*, but rather Aristotle's in the *De anima*. What Plato meant by the συναμφότερον was certainly not the ζῷον minus the higher human soul; it was precisely the 'both-together' of that 'other soul' that stems from 'yonder' with the body including the lower human soul. Nor did Plato ever say that, in a way, 'we' are the ζῷον without the higher soul. He could not have said so, since in his view no human ζῷον could ever have existed without the proper human soul, to which belongs the thinking soul as its most important part[27]. Plato did not flatly identify man with that 'most important part'. In fact, by his view of the συναμφότερον he kept the unity of man better than Plotinus did, who followed the track of Aristotle. For what Plotinus calls the συναμφότερον is what for Aristotle was the σύνθετον, viz. the essential unity of a body with a soul as its form or entelechy[28]. It is clear that soul taken in this sense must die with its body. Hence, Aristotle taught that the thinking mind (νοῦς), which is immortal, is of a different nature and 'enters from outside'[29]. Plotinus shared Plato's view when assuming the existence of an archetypal man 'yonder'. Moreover, he rejected Aristotle's thesis that the soul is the entelechy of the body[30]. Yet, his 'other soul' of II 1, 5.21 reminds

[25] Translation by A. H. Armstrong, Loeb Class. Libr. 1966.

[26] II 3, 9.30-31.

[27] Plato, *Tim.* 90a: τὸ κυριώτατον παρ' ἡμῖν ψυχῆς εἶδος. For the rest, Plotinus had learned from Plato the lesson that no body can exist without a soul. He does not admit that here either. He only distinguished between the soul that is cause of 'being' and the 'other soul' which is cause of well-being (II 1, 5.19-22). This formula, too, stems from Aristotle.

[28] Aristotle, *De anima* II 1, 412a 3-b15. As a matter of fact, Plotinus uses sometimes the term σύνθετον in contradistinction to the higher soul. Thus e.g., in I 1, 11.1.

[29] Aristotle, *De gen. an.* II 3, 736b22-29. Cf. *De anima* III 5, 430a10-25.

[30] *Enn.* IV 7, 8^5.

somewhat too much of Aristotle's *noûs* entering from without; which is only a consequence of the fact that his συναμφότερον was actually conceived in the way of Aristotle's σύνθετον.

In II 3, 9 Plotinus quotes the *Timaeus*[31], saying that the god who made the world gives 'the first principle of the soul', but the gods who are borne through the heavens 'the terrible and inevitable passions', 'angers' and desires and 'pleasures and pains' and 'the other kind of soul', from which come passions of this kind[32]. Thus, 'we' are actually 'the inner man', 'to whom nature gave power to master our passions'[33]. And here we join Plotinus in the treatise I 1, Τί τὸ ζῷον καὶ τίς ὁ ἄνθρωπος, c. 7, in which, after having described the 'perception of the soul' as a contemplation of 'forms' which takes place ἀπαθῶς, he explains that from these forms derive our reasonings, opinions and acts of intuitive intelligence; ''and this precisely is where 'we' are. For that which comes before this is 'ours', but 'we', in our presidency over the living being, are what extends from this point upwards''[34].

After this he grants that there is no objection to calling the whole thing 'living being'; the lower parts of it are something mixed, but it is on the level of thought that the true man begins. Those lower parts are 'lion-like' and altogether 'the multi-coloured beast'[35].

'We' are 'the soul', so he summarizes briefly[36], adding nevertheless that the term 'we' is used in two senses, either including 'the beast' or referring only to that which transcends it. 'The beast' is the body which has been given life. But the true man is the spiritual man, clear of the affections connected with the body, and possessing the virtues of the spirit, also referred to as the virtues of 'the man within' (ὁ ἔνδον ἄνθρωπος)[37].

These then were the passages in which Plotinus explicitly raised the question of 'who is man'. The way in which he replied to it, in particular his manner of opposing what *he* called the συναμφότερον to the higher soul of man may make it clear to us that we will get the most ample information on the συναμφότερον in Plato's sense, viz. on man-in-a-body, in the extensive treatises on the soul in the Fourth Ennead. In the treatise IV 3 we found him enlarging on the soul's living at different levels[38]. In the

[31] Plato, *Tim.* 69c5-d3.

[32] *Enn.* II 3, 9.6-10; translation by A. H. Armstrong, l.c.

[33] Ibid., 14-16. The term 'the inner man' does not occur here, but it is used e.g. in *Enn.* I 1, 10.15.

[34] *Enn.* I 1, 7.16-18; translation by A. H. Armstrong l.c.

[35] Ibid., 18-21. The expression τὸ ποικίλον θήριον stems from Plato, *Rep.* IX 588c7; τὸ λεοντῶδες, ibid. 590ba.

[36] *Enn.* I 1, 10.1.

[37] Ibid. 5-15.

[38] In the passage IV 3, 4.21-37, mentioned above (p. 216, with n. 19).

same treatise we found him dealing extensively with sense-perception[39] and with memory[40]. In all this he is actually dealing with man as a whole. Continually he emphasizes the non-dependence of the higher soul on the body. So he did in the early treatise IV 7 (*On the Soul's immortality*) and III 1 (*On Fate*), in particular in his rejection of the theory that soul would be the entelechy of a body[41], and in the treatise *On Fate* by relying on the spiritual origin of the soul, by which it is itself a primary cause[42]. In IV 4, 43 man as a spiritual being is most emphatically placed beyond the causal nexus of physical nature, so that he is immune to magic influence and drugs[43]. The treatise *On eudaimonia* (I 4), which belongs to the last group of Plotinus' writings, contains a remarkable chapter in which the author argues that, though it might *seem* so that even a man living at the level of noûs may lose his faculty of thinking either by illness or by drugs, in fact it is only the reflection of that which happens in noûs on the lower level of the soul (which is a kind of looking-glass in which noetic activity is reflected) that does not work any longer. In such a case the life of the spirit is no longer perceptible to us; but it does go on unhampered, and perhaps even purer than when it is reflected[44].

As for the 'substance' of soul, Plotinus declares that soul is both divisible and undivided, of which qualities the latter belongs to soul itself, while the former is due to the bodies in which it abides[45]. This twofold nature of soul corresponds with its intermediate position in the order of the universe: it is situated in the lower parts of the **νοητόν**, confined on sensible nature[46], to which it has to impart something of itself. The famous image of Soul as dwelling in a borderland, so familiar to the Cappadocians Basilius and Gregory of Nyssa and after these to Nemesius of Emesa[47], stems from Plotinus. He speaks repeatedly of the double function of Soul, which is not only thinking (by which it is akin to *Noûs*) but in particular the task of ordering and governing that which 'comes after it'[48].

[39] In the ch. IV 3, 26, referred to above, in n. 16.

[40] In the same chapter, 26.50-56 and the following ones. See my *Greek Philosophy* III, 1378b-c. He goes on discussing memory and the rôle of the φανταστικόν in it in the final chapters of the treatise 3 (31-32) and goes on without interruption in the beginning of the Fourth treatise.

[41] IV 7, 8^5.35-51. Plotinus argues that, as an ousia, soul cannot depend on its being in a body.

[42] III 1, 8.4-20. See my *Greek Phil.* III, 1418.

[43] IV 4, 43.1-7; *Greek Phil.* III, 1432c (with notes).

[44] I 4, 10; *Greek Phil.* III, 1422c.

[45] IV 2, 1.62-76; *Greek Phil.* III, 1371b.

[46] Ὡς ὅμορον οὖσαν τῇ αἰσθητῇ φύσει, *Enn.* IV 8, 7.6-7. See for the whole passage in *Greek Phil.* III, 1372a with my notes under the text.

[47] For this passage in its historical context see *Greek Phil.* III, 1181b.

[48] *Enn.* IV 8, 3.21-31 (*Greek Phil.* 1375a). See also *Enn.* IV 7, 13 (*Greek Phil.* 1375b).

Since, then, this is the particular task of the soul, one could not say that the descent into a body would be unnatural to it. As we remarked above, Plotinus did not hold that. On the contrary, though he was well aware of the risks implied in the descent, he did acknowledge that it is natural and pointed out that, in principle, individual souls can exercise their task of taking care of a body without being harmed in their spiritual nature, which is their true self[49]. It is interesting to see that Plotinus not only spoke of the soul's descending into a body, but repeatedly also about the body coming to its soul and longing for the soul that suits it[50]. The body 'comes to its soul' in order to take part of its life and thus become a living being. This view of bodies as desiring not just any soul, but of a particular body as desiring one particular soul that fits it, is Aristotle's view of the relationship of matter and its form[51]. We found similar traces of Aristotelean influence in Plotinus' account of sense-perception and in his concept of the **συναμφότερον**. In the former he was not basically at variance with Plato, in the latter he was.

Summarizing we find that Plotinus' view of man is profoundly rooted in his metaphysics: he places man within the framework of his ontology. Thus, he gives a full metaphysic of the human personality, (1) in its liberty, since, as a spiritual being, man transcends the order of the physical universe; (2) in the uniqueness of its individuality, since the differences between individual men are too profound to be traced back to matter as their cause[52]; (3) in its two-sidedness since man is ontologically

[49] See the passages quoted above in note 5; *Greek Phil.* III, 1375a, 1376c, 1377.

[50] Thus in *Enn.* VI 4, 15.1-17; ibid. 16.7-17.

[51] Aristotle, *Phys.* II 2, 194b8-9: Ἔτι τῶν πρός τι ἡ ὕλη· ἄλλῳ γὰρ εἴδει ἄλλη ὕλη.

[52] *Enn.* V 7, 1.19-23. I discussed the problem of personality in Plotinus in my paper 'Personality in Greek and Christian thought', *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington 1963, p. 20-60, section III, 46-56. See in particular 51ff. (on *Enn.* IV 4, 1-2) and 53ff. on V 7, 1, in which an archetypal Form of each individual man is postulated, a postulate which is not abandoned in any of the later treatises, such as V 9, 12; VI 3, 9 or VI 5, 8.39ff. In the last-mentioned passage it is said that it would make no sense to introduce a multitude of ideas of Fire. This does not interfere, however, with the principle that individual *men* should have their archetype 'yonder'.

It is a pity that H.-R. Schwyzer did not know the above-mentioned paper, or at least did not remember what I said there on *Enn.* IV 4, 2, when he wrote his paper on 'The Intellect in Plotinus and the archetypes of G. C. Jung' for the volume *Kephalaion*, offered to me in 1975. However attractive it might be to find Jung's theory of a 'Collective Unconscious' prefigured in Plotinus, it is somewhat amazing to find a scholar such as my highly esteemed friend Schwyzer declaring that for Plotinus 'each Idea within the Intellect was *identical* to each other Idea'. How is it possible that the author did not remember—what is certainly very well known to him—that for Plotinus *Noûs* was by no means a total unity without any differentiation, but ἓν πολλά, a unity differentiated by the principle of the ἕτερον.

'The differences between the single Ideas disappear just as the differences between the single Souls ought to be removed, for otherwise comprehension between men cannot be

placed in the border-country between noetic and sensible being, though he still belongs to the former.

The question may be raised of whether Plotinus' view of man did not miss precisely that point which to us moderns is the most essential to man, so much so that it actually constitutes what in our view is the human person: I mean man's being related to his fellow-man, to-day by preference referred to as 'the other'. Is it true that this view of man as basically related to 'the other' is lacking in Plotinus? Modern personalists usually think so. Anyhow, their opinion offers us a serious cause for critical reflection.

I think their judgment was based on misunderstanding, resulting from an imperfect view of the whole of Plotinus' image of man. In that image the final destination of man, the summit of what man can attain, was the vision of the ultimate Ground of Being. This vision surpassed the level of the philosopher's life in contact with the intelligible. It did presuppose that life, but it was like a gift received beyond it. Now such an ideal was certainly not of an anthropocentric character. It was clearly theocentric. Only, what should be remembered is that for Plotinus the philosopher's life at the *Noûs*-level always *implied* social virtue, which is to be practised in the communication with other men. It not only *presupposed* that virtue, in such a sense that, on entering the superior level, it could be left behind. No, just as for Plato, also in the philosopher's life social virtue should be always present. This is what Plotinus taught explicitly in his treatise *On Virtue* (*Enn.* I 2); that he practised it himself in daily life, is what we learn from Porphyry[53]. But nothing is more revealing than his devastating criticism of the Gnostics who speak about 'looking to God' without caring for virtue. This is a kind of pseudo-religion. For without purifying your soul by the control of passions, it makes no sense to speak about God; you could not see or understand anything of the world-

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realized'. Does the author really think that for Plotinus intuitive knowledge implied that all differences between individual Forms (including those of individual men) should disappear? If that were so, there would not be anything like archetypal Being in the ontological sense. However, for Plotinus, in spite of his identification of Being and Thinking, Being was, ontologically speaking, prior, and the multiplicity of primary Being was for this philosopher a basic ontological truth.

[53] In the Π. ἀρετῶν 7.10-12 Plotinus says that man who has 'the greater virtues' must necessarily have the lesser ones 'potentially'. He does say that the ὁμοίωσις τῷ θεῷ, which is the higher virtue, sometimes will take the place of the lower one. But this does certainly not mean that in Plotinus' opinion some kind of living-near-to-God would have been possible at the cost of social righteousness and loving-kindness towards others. How far such a mentality was removed from Plotinus, may be seen from Porphyry's *V.P.* 8-12, which shows us a man of a remarkable openness to others, even in small and seemingly unimportant things. But it appears still stronger in his almost fierce reaction against the Gnostics, who pretended that it is possible to come to God without any preparation of the heart or of the mind. II 9, 9.52-60; II 9, 15.26-40, to be cited below.

beyond. 'Without true virtue talking about "God" is just a meaningless dictum'[54].

True, the cult of 'the other', such as it is propagated nowadays, a cult which actually substitutes man for God, was very far from Plotinus. For our age the danger is rather to lose the awareness of the actual transcendency of God. Plotinus, certainly, was not a Christian. Though the account of his daily life does prove that he cared for the helpless and unprotected[55] and also had an unusual feeling for the inner distress of a fellow-man[56], he certainly did not have any preference for the suffering, the poor and the humble. But to make him so self-centered that the interest or 'feeling' for 'the other' would have been totally alien to him, would be incorrect.

There is one other important topic to be discussed. It is the problem of whether Plotinus' view of man was not over-spiritualist, since he posited, that man in his essence was impeccable and could sin only by those things which secondarily were 'added' to him, when his originally divine soul was united with a body[57]. Here we touch upon the subject in which most later Neoplatonists, following Iamblichus, took another stand than Plotinus and sometimes opposed him quite violently.

To judge the case correctly we must have a precise view, first of what Plotinus held concerning the soul, second of what later Neoplatonists altered in that which they said to be his doctrine. Since the quarrel is about the soul and what is said to be its essence and what not, we have briefly to examine Plotinus' doctrine on this topic, inquiring in particular into the question of whether or not he made a clear distinction between the Soul and *Noûs*.

Soul then, which originates from *Noûs*, as another circle of Light, turning round *Noûs* which itself turns round the One, is in its origin quite clearly distinguished from *Noûs*[58], which is referred to as 'God its Father'[59]: as an offspring (γέννημα) it *must* be inferior to *Noûs*[60]. That which is produced is an 'image', and the image is always of a secondary order and, hence, inferior to its origin. As an immediate offspring, however, Soul is always very closely connected with *Noûs*: it depends on

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[54] II 9, 15.40.

[55] Porphyry, V.P. 9.

[56] Porphyry's own case, according to *V.P.* 11.11-15.

[57] The προσθῆκαι: see *Enn.* IV 7, 13.2-13; I 1, 12.21. Cf. also II 3, 9.20-21: τὰ προσγεγενημένα. The whole passage in *Greek Phil.* III, 1413b.

[58] V 1, 6.44-47; ibid. 7.36-41.

[59] V 1, 1.1; ibid. 2, 37-38; 3, 1-7. It is clear that by τὸ ψυχῆς πρὸς τὸ ἄνω γειτόνημα not the One, but *Noûs* is meant, of which the Soul is said to be an εἰκών.

[60] V 1, 6.38-39 (καὶ ἔλαττον δὲ ἑαυτοῦ γεννᾷ); ibid. 7, 37-41 (κρεῖττον δὲ οὐχ οἷόν τε εἶναι οὐδ' ἐνταῦθα τὸ γεννώμενον, ἀλλ' ἔλαττον ὂν εἴδωλον εἶναι αὐτοῦ).

Him directly, is filled with His divine Light and, as a thinking Being, takes part of Him, while, on the other hand, it also touches what comes after it, viz. its own production; for belonging still to the order of divine Being, the Soul too is necessarily productive. And it produces something that is necessarily of a lower order than it is itself[61].

It is here that Plotinus draws the border-line between divine Being and sensible things: 'Up till here we were dealing with the Divine'[62]. That the soul is thus declared to be a divine Being could hardly have shocked such men as Porphyry or Iamblichus; on the contrary, they would easily agree. But it might, and may still, shock Christians, in so far as they were, or are, not familiar with the Neoplatonist way of thinking. The philosopher would seem to them to have equalled the human-soul, and man with it, to God. How far Plotinus was, in fact, from equalling man's soul to the One, will be clear to any reader of such a treatise as the *On the three basic hypostases*, a treatise which is certainly representative of Plotinus' metaphysics. However, by explaining the origin of the soul as the third hypostasis all problems are not solved. It may be clear that the third hypostasis is inferior to the second, just as the second is to the first; but one might ask *by which qualities* soul is different from *Noûs*, and here some problems might arise. When answering that it is proper to soul to possess discursive thinking, we shall be certainly right; only, to render Plotinus' view correctly, we have to add that this is not the only way of thinking of the soul; beside discursive thinking, it also has the noetic thinking-form, which is intuitive. This is the thinking-form proper to the soul as long as it is looking up to what is ontologically 'before' it: *Noûs*, which is primary Being. What is peculiar to Soul is precisely its double character; it may look to that which is 'before' it and thus keep the noetic thinking-form,—yes, it *must* do so; but it has also the duty of looking to what comes *after* it: the soul has the task of ordering and ruling this, and so it could not simply stay in noetic thinking[63]. We found that this double character of the Soul is due to its μέση τάξις: on the edge of noetic Being, and neighbouring upon the sensible world[64], and concluded with the philosopher that, since taking care of a body is natural to a soul, it actually has to turn that way and does not sin by doing so[65],—unless it should attach itself to the body and to material things and lose its contact with what is beyond[66].

[61] V 1, 7.41-47.
[62] V 1, 7.48: Καὶ μέχρι τούτων τὰ θεῖα.
[63] IV 8, 3.21-31.
[64] IV 8, 7, 1-14.
[65] *Supra*, n. 49; also IV 8, 5.24-30.
[66] IV 8, 4.11-28.

The phenomena mentioned in the last-cited passage—casting wings and being enchained in a body, buried as in a tomb or enclosed in a cavern—are all the well-known symbolic expressions used by Plato; also the possibility of a return from the cavern up to the light of the seen. 'For something of the transcendent stays always in it, in spite of its fallen state'. One could hardly say that Plotinus' account here does not follow Plato's: the prisoners in the cavern *could* be freed from their bonds, drawn upwards, and by exercise get slowly used to the light on earth. How? By turning off from sensibles to the activity of pure *noèsis*, taking as their starting-point the memory of transcendent Being which sometimes may be awakened in them by a word of another man or by the sight of some particular object[67]. Plato said: 'Education is not something like putting light into blind eyes; the soul already has the power of sight: it does possess the power of learning the truth and the organ to see it with'.—Is that not the 'something of the transcendent'—ὑπερέχον τι—which according to Plotinus always remains with the soul, even in the case it has attached itself to things down here?

In Plotinus' accounts of the soul we came repeatedly accross the term or notion of προσθῆκαι, also referred to as τὸ προστεθέν or τὰ προσγεγενημένα[68]. Προσθήκη is everything added to the soul in the state of original purity in which it comes from *Noûs*. The first thing added to it is a certain appetency (ὄρεξις) which makes it desire to go out and arrange things 'after it', according to what it has seen in *Noûs*[69]. Such an appetency is of course a symptom of a certain unrest which, as the philosopher described in his treatise *On eternity and time*[70], is proper to Soul in contradistinction to *Noûs*. For *Noûs* is the realm of eternity, which is 'total life which in its fullness is ever present'. Soul, however, was just not able to bear that all intelligible Being was present to it directly and as a whole. Some non-quiet power in it asked for a succession of acts. Thus, its life is a motion by which it passes from one state into the other, and *this is time*, while the ever constant life of intelligible Being is eternity[71]. Time, then, is essentially connected with Soul, just as eternity belongs to the realm of intelligible Being[72].

What else could we infer from this than that it belongs to the *essence* of the Soul to have within itself that unquiet element which makes it turn to

[67] Plato on the rôle of education: *Rep.* VII 518b-d. 'By the sight of some particular object': *Phaedo* 73d-c.
[68] A few passages were mentioned above, in my n. 57.
[69] *Enn.* IV 7, 13.2-13. Cf. also IV 8, 4.1ff.
[70] III 7, 11.20-23: ψυχῆς ἦν τις δύναμις οὐχ ἥσυχος.
[71] The definition of eternity is found in *Enn.* III 7, 3.8-38; 5.22-30; the definition of time in III 7, 11.43-45, concluding the argument of the preceding passage, 35-43.
[72] III 7, 11.59-60.

what comes 'after' it and makes it think in the way of discursive thinking, διάνοια, which implies time? Thus, we can conclude that Soul as such has προσθῆκαι, which appear to belong to its ontological position, which is naturally an intermediate one.

This statement explains why later Neoplatonists, in particular Iamblichus, could find fault with Plotinus for having said that the Soul is *essentially* noetic and reproach him with not having duly distinguished Soul from *Noûs*. It *explains* the ground of their criticism. This is not saying that what they substituted as a different doctrine differed in fact from what Plotinus taught. Our above-made statement made this much clear, that *a more precise form of expression* concerning the essence of the soul was possible and even desirable. Nevertheless, within the framework of Neoplatonism one could not say that Plotinus' teaching on the soul was wrong; nor did he deviate from Plato, as later Neoplatonists liked to say. The following three points should be remembered.

(1) Plotinus often refers to the intelligible archetype of man and the human soul. This archetype was, as primary Being naturally is, eternal and perfect.

(2) The soul as 'offspring' of *Noûs* keeps 'something of the transcendent' within itself, in so far as an offspring always keeps a resemblance with its father. That the abiding presence of this resemblance may increase the possibility of a return, was another obvious fact.

(3) The return implied a *kátharsis*, which means a stripping off the *prosthèkai*. Thus, Soul will be 'noïfied' in returning yonder[73], which means that it will *assimilate* itself to *Noûs*—the ὁμοίωσις τῷ θεῷ, well-known from *Theaet.* 176b.

None of these three points implies an identification of Soul with *Noûs*. The first concerns the Soul's origin, the second its essential resemblance to the Father and the possibility of a return, the third marks the fact that the return means an assimilation. None of these points had the character of an innovation after Plato, nor was any of them alien to the thought of such men as Iamblichus or Proclus. Saying that the Soul always kept a resemblance to its Father was not an *identification*[74] nor would the return make the Soul flatly identical with *Noûs*. For the regained noetic character of Soul would always be an acquired state, while *Noûs* itself is primary[75].

On the other hand, the possibility of a return did by no means exclude the fact that the Soul might go astray, attach itself to sensible things and

[73] *Enn.* VI 8, 5.34ff.: virtue defined as ἕξις οἷον νοωθῆναι τὴν ψυχὴν ποιοῦσα.
[74] E.g. V 1, 7.38-46; cf. I 6, 6.13-18.
[75] This is brought out in the last-mentioned passage.

lose the view of that which is 'beyond'. Plotinus knew that this is what frequently happens. He also saw this as a sinful state, due to the soul's own choice[76]. On the other hand, he did notice that there was something attractive in sensible things, so much so that they could have a really seductive power[77].

Plotinus was perfectly alive to these problems. What were the corrections later Neoplatonists thought they had to apply to his doctrine? They were essentially three.

(1) The essence of the soul is not purely noetic but mixed, since its place is intermediate.

(2) The soul descends in its totality, no part of it staying 'above'.

(3) Soul is not impeccable; on the contrary, it is responsible for its behaviour[78].

By these three points Iamblichus and his followers claimed to go back to Plato, whom Plotinus had more or less betrayed by an over-spiritualism. This claim appears to be neither entirely justified nor without any ground. In fact the three above-mentioned theses rather appear to express more precisely the substance of Plotinus' doctrine than to overthrow or refute it. The first thesis certainly was a correction from a formal point of view. The second started from a certain misunderstanding of such a text as *Enn.* IV, 8, 4.30-31. For since in Plotinus' view the Soul as a spiritual being had no parts, the 'something of the transcendent' that always stays with it, also when it has gone astray, cannot be understood as 'a part', to be separated off from the rest of the Soul, but it must mean something of the faculty of noetic thinking, which remains with it at least potentially. And such a view was certainly in accordance with Plato. Likewise, when our soul is said not to have come down in its totality since 'something of it is always in the Intelligible'[79], the 'something' cannot be conceived of as 'a part', separable from the whole, but it must indicate the fact that something of the faculty of noetic thinking stays always with the soul, also when it is dwelling in a body.

[76] See e.g. V 1, 1.5-8.
[77] I 1, 12.24-27: αἴτιον τὸ ἐλλαμπόμενον. But cf. III 1, 8.4-20: the soul an independent cause.
[78] On the 'substance' of the Soul see in particular Iamblichus, *De anima* ap. Stob., *Ecl.* I 365.5-366.12 W. For the second thesis see Proclus *in Parm.*, 948.18; for the third Iambl. ap. Proclum *in Tim.* 341E, t. III, 334.4ff. Diehl; Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste* III, 'Les doctrines de l'âme', 184f., 252f.; Fortin, *Christianisme et culture philosophique au cinquième siècle*, Paris 1959, p. 98f. On Iamblichus' doctrine of the soul we have now the work of Dr. Carlos G. Steel at Louvain, entitled *The changing Self. A Study on the Soul in later Neoplatonism: Iamblichus, Damascius and Priscianus.* Verh. Kon. Akad. v. Wetensch. te Brussel, Kl.d.Lett., 7g. XL, 1978, no. 85.
[79] IV 8, 8.2-3. Cf. also I 1, 7.1-3: The soul is present in the composite, but does not give itself to it such as it is.

The third thesis was a logical consequence of the first. For as soon as soul is defined as essentially noetic, it will be impeccable; on the other hand, as soon as it is taken as having προσθῆκαι, it can sin. This is, in fact, the Soul's paradox: both theses were right. Soul, when it keeps looking upwards, in the direction of where it has come from, cannot sin; but it has to go down and give its care to a body. It is up to the soul, then, to see whether it will keep at a due distance, or just plunge totally into that world of phenomena created by its own illumination. It may or it may not turn that way. The soul has the choice; it is responsible.

Plotinus was aware of the paradox[80]. He also saw clearly that 'yielding to the inferior' is not so much a matter of a deliberate choice. That is a somewhat too intellectual account of what actually happens to man in a body: here 'phantasy' comes in and does its work before the reasoning faculty has passed judgment on it; we are just carried along by what is lower in us[81]. In such a case Plotinus even speaks of 'suffering a defeat by the *violence* of desires'[82]. But in such a case a man can hardly be said to act freely[83]; however, such a state of involuntary action will not occur when the pure Soul has the leading part[84].

The last-cited chapter of Plotinus offered rather an eloquent commentary on Socrates' famous thesis that 'nobody sins willingly'.

Let us now conclude this brief discussion of an old controversy by asking two questions.

1. Was Plotinus, as compared with Plato, or was he not rightly charged with the blame of over-spiritualism?

2. If it is true that men like Porphyry and Iamblichus were at the bottom as much spiritualists as Plotinus was, how did they come to criticize him so sharply with regard to his doctrine on the Soul?

I think the first question has to be answered in the affirmative, though on different grounds from those that were alleged by Fortin. I do not think that Plotinus was at variance with Plato by exalting the soul in a way never seen before. This idea rather goes back to a certain misunderstanding of certain texts of Plotinus in which the soul is declared to belong to 'the Divine' or even to be a god[85]. The analogical use of the

[80] It is rather clearly brought out in such a passage as *Enn.* III 1, 8.4-20. Cf. also I 1, 9.1-16.

[81] Τοῖς χείροσι πεισθέντες, I 1, 9.10.

[82] III 1, 9.14-15: ἐκ βίας ἐπιθυμιῶν.

[83] Ibid. 4-7.

[84] Ibid. 9-14.

[85] Fortin, p. 94f., 98f. It would be better in this context not to make use of such a text as *Enn.* VI 9, 9.56-61, in which the author says a word about the *visio dei*, granted sometimes to him by some particular grace. When he says that, in this particular

terms θεῖον and θεός often puzzles Christians. Anyhow, the usage was by no means peculiar to Plotinus or Neoplatonism; it is found in Plato and Aristotle just as well. Plato, too, referred to perfect souls as 'gods', and it is only a modern misunderstanding to take this as a sign that 'in a later period' he had abandoned the theory of intelligible Forms and substituted souls as gods[86].

A thing Plotinus did do, while Plato did not, was: identifying the human personality ('we') simply with the thinking Soul. In this he followed a later tradition which, for the rest, took its origin though not in Plato himself, yet in his immediate surroundings, with the author of the *First Alcibiades*[87], and with Aristotle, not only in the *Protrepticus* and *On philosophy*, but in the *EN* and the *De anima* as well[88]. The *noûs* is what is divine in us, our best part, and thus our real self. So we find in the *Somnium Scipionis* the ghost of Scipio Africanus from an exalted place in heaven speaking to the younger Scipio: 'Nec enim tu is es quem forma ista declarat, sed *mens cuiusque is est quisque*'[89], a famous passage in literature according to the judgment of later and late Antiquity, and by Macrobius' commentary in the Middle Ages as well. One might say that the post-Platonic formula for the human person gave rise to an increased measure of spiritualism. This approach was certainly wide-spread in Plotinus' day. One could really not say that he innovated on this point.

enlightenment, we see *Him*—and in that overflowing Light also ourselves as, so to speak, glorified and radiant—'in so far as such a vision is permitted', it would be somewhat indiscrete to dogmatize on such a passage. We can imagine, after all, that after some particular enlightenment a Christian, too, might express himself in similar terms, if he would do so at all.

[86] The latter interpretation was given e.g. by Fr. Solmsen, *Plato's theology*, Ithaca 1942. A much better understanding of Plato's doctrine of the Soul as God in the books X and XII of the *Laws* is found in A. Dies' Introduction to the Budé-edition of the *Laws* Paris 1951, LXX-LXXXIII: in particular XCff., 'Le palier moyen'.

[87] *Alcib. Mai.* 130c. 'Man is not the συναμφότερον, but nothing else than soul' is a much-cited text, which in later Antiquity was generally attributed to Plato. Yet, I think we have to be quite categorical about the unauthenticity of the dialogue. The argument made by E. de Strycker, 'L'authenticité du Premier Alcibiade', *Les études class.* (1942), 135-151, holds good. I should like to invite the reader who wishes to see for himself just to open the pages of the dialogue and read the beginning. He will find in the opening passage a Socrates saying to Alcibiades: 'Perhaps you are amazed that, while I did not speak to you during so many preceding years, now I have approached you. The reason of my long silence was nothing human, but a divine voice forbidding me to talk to you'.—If the reader is a bit sensitive to what may and what may not have been written by Plato, I think on reading these lines for him the light will at once turn red. His doubts will be confirmed when he goes on reading. But when at a certain moment the Socrates of this dialogue rebukes the young Alcibiades for being so stupid, then, I guess, for the critical reader the door will be closed. It is not possible that Plato's Socrates spoke in this way.

[88] Arist., *Protrept.* 10c Ross, Fragm. sel. Cf. *Metaph.* Λ 3, 1070a24-26; *Eth. Nic.* X 7.1177b26-31, and in particular 1178a2-4. For *Peri phil.* cf. Cic. *Acad. post.* I 7, 26.

[89] Cicero, *De republ.* VI 26. See my *Greek Phil.* III, 959b (with comments).

As for Plato, he was, in fact, not an over-spiritualist. He did not identify man with the thinking soul or *noûs*; he did hold that the thinking soul was by nature superior to the body and thus had to lead and govern it. But he thought the body an extremely important thing, since it had to serve the soul. Therefore, Plato's whole system of education was built on the principle of equal training of both body and soul, and this was for him the absolute condition to a harmonious life. A man falling short in physical training would not be admitted by him as a candidate for the study of philosophy[90]. He even said that, if a man had a great and strong soul in a small and petty body, such a man could never be beautiful, because he would show a disproportion between his two basic components[91]. In the prooemium to his *Laws*, meant for a basic education of the people, he expressed his high esteem for the body by declaring that, of the most valuable possessions confided to the care of each of us, while the soul was first, the body was second, thus acknowledging the body to be a most precious thing[92].

A sentence of the *Phaedo*, often cited in this form that the philosopher was declared there to hate the body[93], has been somewhat misused in this respect. Hackforth rendered the text better by speaking of 'their continual quarrel with the body'. However, one must remember that the philosophers in the *Phaedo* always wish to have 'the soul by itself', and this means, in fact, that they feel the body to be a hindrance to reaching knowledge of purely intelligible Being. Plato's Socrates is radical enough to declare that, as a mater of fact, philosophers wish to get rid of the body, and thus could not be sad when this would actually happen (by death). This is certainly not a doctrine for everyone, and Plato was the first to know that. What he meant by 'knowledge of the Truth' was certainly a spiritualist ideal, accessible only to the small number of those who were able to see it.

Here, then, Plato does not really differ from Plotinus. He did, generally speaking, in his attitude towards the body, such as we found it, repeatedly: positive, vigorous and highly active. Plotinus' appreciation of the body, on the other hand, was certainly much more reserved. In front of the Gnostics he had a word of praise for the beauty of the body, and recognized the traces of the divine in it[94]. The body is the house in

[90] *Rep.* VII 535d.
[91] *Timaeus* 87d.
[92] *Laws* V 728d.
[93] *Phaedo* 67e5: Εἰ γὰρ διαβέβληνται μὲν πανταχῇ σώματι,—.
[94] *Enn.* II 9, 17.14-26. Καὶ γὰρ διὰ τὰ πρῶτα ταῦτα. 'For the beauty of things here'—καλὰ σώματα, καλὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα, καλὰ μαθήματα, in the sequence of Plato's *Symp.* 211c—'exist because of the beauty of primary Being'. Ibid. 32-38: one must go on from the beautiful things here to the perfect Beauty yonder, without blaming the things here.

which we live. Instead of blaming the structure and the builder, we should rather praise Him for having made the house with the greatest art, and wait quietly for the time to come, in which we will not need a house any longer[95].

This is a positive appreciation. Yet, even in these chapters Plotinus' attitude is rather that of 'meekly accepting the nature of all things'[96], rather the tone of 'tolerating what is unavoidable'[97], which is rather the tone of resignation, much more than that joyful assent, which we find in Plato's *Symposium*, that spirit of vigorous training that we know from the *Republic*, and lastly that praise of the body as a most precious instrument as expressed in the *Laws*. The fact mentioned by Porphyry[98], that Plotinus avoided the luxurious places in which the human body was cultivated in public, was not an indication of uncleanliness. But after all, 'Plotinus seemed to be ashamed of being in a body'. That is the opening phrase of Porphyry's *V.P.* Socrates and Plato certainly were far from such an attitude of mind. In this Plotinus shows the features of a very different age. Asceticism as practised by fourth century Christian monks was not an isolated matter in the world of late Antiquity. There was a common spiritual background, very different from the spiritual climate of classical Greece[99].

To the second question—how men like Porphyry and Iamblichus, spiritualist thinkers themselves, came to criticize Plotinus so harshly in his doctrine of the Soul—I would suggest the following reply.

Both Porphyry and Iamblichus found themselves in perpetual discussion with Christianity. This discussion had certainly not so much the character of a friendly dialogue, but rather, on Porphyry's side, that of a pretty sore polemic, while Iamblichus, who lived in an age in which Christianity was already solidly established, took the part of an apologist constructing a counter-system. Both of them will have endeavoured to give to Neoplatonism a form that could not be so easily attacked by the other party. Thus, they would be inclined to avoid such a thesis as that which emphasized the divinity of the soul, declaring her to be impeccable, and rather speak against that.

[95] II 9, 18.4-17.
[96] Πράως συγχωρητέον τῇ πάντων φύσει. Literally so in II 9, 13.5-6.
[97] Φέρειν τὰ ἀναγκαῖα—II 9, 18.13.
[98] *V.P.* 2,5.
[99] E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an age of anxiety* Cambridge 1965, 35, concludes his chapter on 'Man and the material world' by stating that 'contempt of the human condition and hatred of the body was a disease endemic in the entire culture of the period', a statement to which he added, however, that 'its more extreme manifestations' were mainly Christian or Gnostic.

This necessarily succinct discussion of such a complicated theme is certainly not all that could be said on the subject I had to deal with. I hope, however, that these few pages may shed some light on the difficult problems concerning the soul, in particular in the later Neoplatonist discussions, a field of problems that entered thoroughly within the scope of the research of that eminent scholar whom we wish to honour by offering him this contribution.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ΣΩΜΑ-ΣΗΜΑ FORMULA: ITS FUNCTION IN PLATO AND PLOTINUS COMPARED TO ITS USE BY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *

"The body a tomb—the body a temple". That is how present-day theological writers like to oppose what they call "Plato" or "Platonism" to the Christian view of man[1]. A very interesting contrast indeed. However, the question to be asked is: how far does it hold? Is it the case that σῶμα-σῆμα is a doctrinal formula that gives a correct idea of what, on the whole, Plato's view of man was like? As for the Platonism of later Antiquity, it was certainly the case that Plotinus was considerably more ascetically minded, perhaps more "spiritualist" than Plato was. Therefore, it will be interesting to consider also how the σῶμα-σῆμα view functions in Plotinus' view of man: was it his idea of the normal human condition, or will it appear to have been his view of man only under certain particular conditions that depend on an individual man's own free choice? Lastly, how did early Christian writers look at Platonism as an interpretation of human nature? Did they quote the σῶμα-σῆμα formula by preference as representative of Plato's thought? And did they reject it by virtue of their own Christian view of man as a whole of body and soul?

Let us start with Plato. The first time that the σῶμα-σῆμα formula occurs in his dialogues is in the *Gorgias*, 493a, and here it occurs, as it seems to me, in a most undogmatic way. The context is as follows. In the preceding pages Callicles had defended the right of the strongest: "natural justice' is breaking all man-made laws by making oneself master. That is what the really strong man will do, and that is true virtue. Callicles[2] cited Pindar in support of his thesis, and next[3], the example of Zethus in Euripides' *Antiope* as an advocate of the active life of

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[1] I am thinking in particular of a doctoral dissertation, defended before the Faculty of Theology in the University Utrecht, on 9 July 1970, by E. Schroten. The title is: *Kerker of tempel? Over de zin van de lichamelijkheid.* (Prison or temple? On the meaning of corporeality). Dr. Schroten does not intend to write an historical study. He does offer a critical discussion of "the myth of the prison of the soul" as a "model" for illuminating the *condition humaine.* And this he does entirely on the basis of modern anthropology.

[2] Plato, *Gorgias* 484b.

[3] Ibid., 485e-486d.

practical matters. He challenges Socrates to the choice of that kind of life rather than passing his life in such futile things as philosophical discussion. Socrates praises him greatly for his frankness and benevolence. Then he asks: Who are "the *better* sort of people" (οἱ κρείττονες)? The stronger ones, or rather the more intelligent? And if the latter, in which field? For instance, in the medical art or weaving or shoemaking? But will the experts in such arts have a greater share of their own products than others?—To which Callicles replies with an understandable irritation that he is not concerned with mere technicians, but is thinking of those who are intelligent with regard to public affairs and courageous as well. For these are the people who deserve to rule and to get more than others. Being "better" is not at all a matter of "ruling oneself", as Socrates suggests, a definition which would imply controlling one's passions. No, that would once more make a slave of the so-called "better" man. If he is really better, he will not repress his passions, but gratify them. That is *living*! For living without any needs—which is considered by some people[4] to be the ideal state of human life and character—is not an ideal of human life at all: on the contrary, it would make a man a stone or a dead body[5].

To this Socrates replies:

> "But life as described by you would be terrible as well! Euripides might be right then in saying: "Who knows whether living is not being dead, while being dead is living?" Perhaps we too are dead! I at least heard this from some wise man, that now we are dead, and that for us the body is a tomb, while that part of the soul in which passions reside, is of such a nature as to let itself be persuaded and turned upside down. Now there was some witty man, I guess a Sicilian or an Italian, who, mythologizing, called it a big container (πίθος), with a pun on its susceptibility to persuasion (τὸ πιθανόν τε καὶ πειστικόν), while he called the foolish man "uninitiated", and of that part of the soul of people without true insight (the ἀνόητοι, qualified as ἀμύητοι) where the passions are, the unbridled and unenclosed part, he said that "the container is riddled". He used that image because of the unsatiable character of that part of the soul".

From this image we can infer what the word σῆμα meant to the Ancients: it stands for a firm enclosure, a fence, that kept the soul within its limits, not giving way to the excesses of the desires.

The connotation of a "fence" or firm enclosure reappears in the *Cratylus*, 400c, where we read that οἱ ἀμφὶ 'Ορφέα—perhaps Orpheus and

[4] Apparently by Socrates. Cf. Xenophon, *Memor.* I.6.10.

[5] The outburst recalls Pheidippides' reaction in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes (504): at Socrates' promise that he will become like Chaerephon, he exclaims lamentingly: "Alas, how pitiful! I shall become half-dead!"

his companions, or just Orpheus—called the body by the name of σῆμα, because in their view the body had the function of a περίβολος, a fence, so to speak, around the soul. It is Socrates who is speaking. He explains: "Since the soul does penance for those things it is expiating, it has the body (σῶμα) as a fence (σῆμα), in order that it may be saved (ἵνα σῴζηται), an image of a prison. Thus, this is according to its name the "σῶμα", the place of safe-keeping for the soul, until it will have paid the penalty it owes".

In the *Phaedo* we find Socrates on the day before his death explaining to his young friends how he could give them a message for the sophist Euenus, recommending to that man to follow him as soon as possible—a strange piece of advice in the eyes of his companion Simmias, who could not imagine that a man like Euenus would be very much disposed to accept it. Socrates then enters upon a long piece of argument (61d-69e) in which he brings out that for a true philosopher, that is, for a person who spent his life in the search for Truth, to die is gain. For Socrates does not expect that death will be the end. On the contrary, he thinks that the lover of wisdom will pass to another world, where he may behold and enjoy that wisdom which he cannot fully attain in this world.

Socrates does not dogmatize on this belief. Yet he repeatedly expresses himself in terms of confidence and hope, just as he did in addressing his judges towards the end of his *Apology* (41c-d5), saying:

"But you too, Sirs, must be full of hope with regard to death, and one thing you must consider to be true, to wit, this: that there is nothing evil for a good man, either in this life or after death, and that his interests are not neglected by the Gods".

In the *Crito* we see this friend of Socrates entering the prison at an unusually early hour. He finds Socrates sleeping peacefully and sits down at his side for a moment in silence. Socrates, after waking up, tells him that he had a dream which he thinks highly significant. An imposing woman appeared to him, tall and handsome, dressed in a white garment. She called him by his name and said: "Socrates, the day after to-morrow you will arrive in the fertile land of Phthia". Words which Socrates obviously understood as predicting his return *in patriam.*

To Crito's proposal of a safe escape from prison and from the city of Athens he opposes a strong rejection: he feels he cannot go against the laws of the city which protected him throughout his life. Moreover, he feels he could not justify himself when, "in Hades", he had to account for what he had done in his life on earth. He clearly expects some kind of judgment by "those who are in power yonder"[6]. In the *Apology* a judg-

[6] ἀπολογήσασθαι τοῖς ἐκεῖ ἄρχουσιν (*Crito* 54b4-5).

ment in "Hades" by the "true judges", who *are said* to be there[7], is mentioned hypothetically, as one of two possibilities: death may be either a state like a dreamless sleep, or a better kind of life than here, a life in which one will be confronted with those "true judges who *are said* to administer justice yonder". With a touch of humour the aged Socrates speaks of what seems to him a delightful prospect: to find oneself in the company of such ancient wise men as Orpheus and Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer. That would be wonderful. And next, meeting there the Homeric heroes, Palamedes and Ajax the son of Telamon, and talking with them on the unjust judgment passed on them! Lastly, imagine the immense pleasure of asking them questions, for instance to interrogate the man who led that great army against Troy; or Odysseus, Sisyphus and so many others, and to gauge whether they are really wise or only think themselves to be so.

This tone of irony is very far indeed from a dogmatic "eschatology". Yet, no doubt, Socrates was a believer, as much as was Plato. The fact is beyond any doubt. One has only to re-read those lines that follow a little further on, where Socrates addresses his judges in the words already cited above (41c8ff.): "But you too, Sirs, *must* be full of hope; you *must* be sure of one thing", etc.

On what grounds did Plato's Socrates base his undogmatic belief in a life hereafter? It is interesting to see how, again and again, he refers to a certain tradition of "wise men" of olden times, whom he respects and honours. When in the *Phaedo* (61c) he assures Simmias that Euenus will be ready to follow him if he is a philosopher, he adds: "But probably he will not do violence to himself". Simmias' companion Cebes finds a contradiction in such an attitude. He asks for further explanation. Socrates wonders if their Pythagorean teacher Philolaus would not have spoken to them on such matters. As for himself, he will just say what he has heard about them from others. This is indirect evidence, but he is quite willing to communicate to them what he has heard (φθόνος οὐδεὶς λέγειν, he does not want to keep it for himself). "For", so he says, "when we are on the point of leaving for 'yonder', it suits us most particularly to examine our ideas on that journey and let our fancy dwell on it" (μυθολογεῖν περὶ τῆς ἀποδημίας τῆς ἐκεῖ).

Socrates could hardly have expressed himself in more traditionalist and less dogmatic terms: he just repeats what he has heard; he is going to analyse "his ideas" on what that journey will be like (μυθολογεῖν ... ποίαν τινὰ αὐτὴν οἰόμεθα εἶναι) and he is aware that this will be a matter of imagination (μυθολογεῖν) which, though not equal to knowledge, has an il-

[7] *Apol.* 41a1-4.

lustrative power helpful for understanding something of things beyond the strictness of proof.

"Why is it then, Socrates, that they call it wicked to kill oneself?", Cebes asks. For he did indeed hear that from his master Philolaus, and from other people earlier. But apparently they did not explain it. Yet, is it not unreasonable for a man, when death is better for him, not to be allowed to do himself a service?

To which Socrates replies: "Yes, that might seem to be unreasonable. Yet, it *may* make good sense. What is said about it in the Mysteries, viz. that we men are in a sort of prison, and that one ought not to attempt one's release or run away from it, that seems to me an impressive saying (μέγας τίς μοι φαίνεται), and not easy to get to the bottom of[8]. But this much at least, I think, Cebes, is well said, to wit that it is the Gods who look after us, and that we men are amongst the possessions of the Gods".

Cebes agrees. Socrates: "Now, wouldn't you yourself be angry if one of the creatures you possessed were to put an end to itself without your order? And if there were any punishment you could inflict, would you not inflict it?" "Certainly", Cebes replies. And Socrates: "Well, perhaps that shows that it isn't unreasonable that a man ought not to put an end to himself until God brings constraint upon him, as He does now upon me".

This passage is highly significant. We have here a full picture of what Socrates' traditionalism and his belief in divine Providence and life hereafter must have been: a true belief, firm and deeply rooted, based on a *dictum* he heard from others. He referred it back to Orpheus and his followers, and knew that it lived on in Pythagorean schools. He was impressed by it: he thought it "a great and profound saying". "Not easy to look through". It is to go too far to suggest that these words express "some diffidence about the religious beliefs and traditions of which he makes use"[9]. It is not so much a matter of "diffidence", but rather the expression of a keen awareness of the fact that in these matters we have to do with *symbolic* language. No doubt, Socrates was a believer, but not a "fundamentalist". Religious language had for him a very profound sense[10]. About the details of the life hereafter he did not pretend to have any precise knowledge, just as he would not dogmatize about the details

[8] *Phaedo* 62b. This is Hackforth's rendering, which I follow here for the greater part. It is interesting to compare the French translation of L. Robin (in the Budé series) who says with an inimitable elegance: "Formule, sans nul doute, aussi grandiose à mes yeux que peu transparente!".

[9] Hackforth, *Plato's Phaedo*, Cambridge 1955, 36 n. 3.

[10] Xenophon testifies to this repeatedly e.g. *Memor.* I.1, 2-4 (Socrates and the religion of the state), ibid. 9 (on divination), 19 (on the providence of the Gods). Cf. on these passages my ch. VI in *Philosophia* I. Studies in Greek Philosophy, Assen 1970, 138ff.

of the pre-existence of the soul[11]. Yet he did think the "tale" that was told about it in the Mysteries was basically true. Again and again he refers to it with great respect and confidence. He does so when, after Cebes' radical objections, he enters into a discussion of the subject of life hereafter, in *Phaedo* 70c: "There is an ancient tale that comes into my mind".

Παλαιός τις λόγος. It is the same phrase he uses when introducing his great eschatological myth at the end of the *Gorgias* (523a1-3). I think we do not betray him, when we translate as follows:

> "Now listen to a very beautiful tale, You will think, I suppose, it is not a true story (a *mythos*), but I think it is true (a *logos*). For what I am going to tell you, I shall tell you as the truth".

One should certainly not translate the words in our text from *Phaedo* 70c "an ancient *doctrine*" (as Hackforth did). What follows in the *Gorgias* is the description of the judgment passed on the souls after death, by the "true judges" yonder. In the *Apology* Socrates referred to that as τὰ λεγόμενα (40e5-6), that is, "what is told". It is a tale we should remember (*Phaedo* 70c); for it is a true story (*Gorgias* 523a).

By these words Socrates refers to the Orphic-Pythagorean tradition about what happens to souls after death. We found the same language in *Phaedo* 62b, where he is concerned with what we are to think of the human condition. "What is told about it in the Mysteries, that we men are in a sort of prison...". The vagueness of the expression ἔν τινι φρουρᾷ brings out that we have to do with a simile. It has to be handled with due reserve. None the less, we cannot deny that it says something about the human condition, both in Socrates' and in Plato's view. For we should certainly be wrong in opposing the one to the other. If it is Socrates who is speaking in this part of the *Phaedo*, we can say that the prison-simile is not so different from that of the Cave, which is generally considered to contain the essence of classical Platonism. If, on the other hand, the view of man and the human condition in this whole passage of the *Phaedo* (61b-69e) had been alien to the historical Socrates, and in fact expressed only Plato's own view, which in these matters would have been very different from his venerated master's ideas[12], then we would have to admit that in the *Phaedo* Plato had his Socrates hold an entirely invented conversation, which, from the very outset through to the end, would have basically altered his master's most essential thought about life and death

[11] That is what he says in *Meno* 86b7-8: he is not willing to dogmatize about the details, though he is convinced about the essential truth of a life before and after this life.

[12] This is what W. K. C. Guthrie held in his *History of Greek Philosophy* III, Cambridge 1969, 484, "This attitude of Plato's I would venture to call essentially un-Socratic". I have dealt with the matter in *Thēta Pi 2* (1973), 30-39.

and about the philosopher's attitude of mind. Now this is, I think, something we cannot ascribe to Plato. It is amazing that the author of the Cambridge History of Greek Philosophy, who in his fourth volume even took Plato's *Apology of Socrates* as the actual defence speech, delivered by the historical Socrates before his Athenian judges, could be so reluctant to admit the possibility that this philosopher could have spoken of "a perpetual quarrel with the body" (*Phaedo* 67e).

Taking up these matters once more we have to deal with three questions:

1. Is the *phroura* text, as translated above, rightly understood?
2. If so, what is, and what is not, implied in it?
3. What about Plato? Did he not give us a different anthropology in the *Timaeus*, no longer such a desperately dualist view of man as in the *Phaedo*, but a treatment of man-as-a-whole, in whom of course Reason must have the leading part, according to its nature and to the nature of man?

1. *Phroura*. It is interesting to see that towards the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth most scholars understood the *phroura* text as meaning "we are, so to speak, on guard-duty". Now this translation suggests a view of life which no doubt was as much Socratic as it was Platonic: both philosophers held emphatically that man had his task here on earth, in the midst of his fellow-citizens, and that he was not allowed to run away[13]. At the same time this was a view of life that suited well the mentality both of a modern rationalist and of a Christian, both of whom might be shocked by the prison image. However, as to the usage of the Greek word *phroura*, this definitely points rather in the direction of a prison[14]. Moreover, in *Phaedo* 82e Plato's Socrates speaks of the soul as being totally bound within its body and glued to it (ἀτεχνῶς διαδεδεμένην ἐν τῷ σώματι καὶ προσκεκολλημένην) and thus forced to look at things existing "as through an enclosure", ὥσπερ διὰ εἱργμοῦ, which is, in fact, a prison. This suggests that our translation is correct.

2. What is, and what is not, implied in it? First we must say that, for reaching knowledge of the truth, both Socrates and Plato apparently felt the body to be much more a hindrance than a help. As for Socrates, there is no reason to assume that he used to express himself this way throughout his life; but there are certainly good grounds for admitting that he did do so in his last talk with his friends, a few hours before his death.

[13] For Socrates cf. *Apol.* 23b4-c1, 29c5-e3, 31a7-c3; for Plato *Rep.* 540a-c.

[14] Parallels are given by Burnet in his commentary on *Phaedo* 62b3. See also Hackforth's translation p. 36, n. 4.

Does this imply that both Socrates and Plato considered "the human condition" of a soul united to a body to be an *abnormal*, *unsound*, because an *unnatural* state of things?

Lastly, does it imply that Socrates welcomed death as a liberation, and can it be said—as certain German theologians have expressed it[15]—that "he made a feast of his death"? To that last question we may reply without any hesitation that this is certainly not in accordance with Plato's picture of the death of Socrates, but rather makes a parody of it. No doubt, Socrates' instruction to Crito not to forget to offer a cock to Asclepius, brings out that he expected or, at least hoped, that death would be a waking-up to a better life. (In parenthesis, should we not ask those anti-dualist theologians: is not this exactly what any Christian who has lived a righteous life in faith to his Lord, expects and hopes in his last moments?) But Socrates was much too sober a man and too respectful before the mystery of death to "make a feast of it"[16]. That is certainly not the tone of the final pages of the *Phaedo.*

3. But let us concentrate on Plato and raise the question of what his view of concrete man and his life on earth was: do the prison and the cave similes imply that he considered the birth of man in a body as in itself a fall of the soul, that is to say, an event creating a situation by which the soul was *essentially and necessarily harmed*, so as to have become "sinful", impure, inclined to evil and unable to live a spiritual life according to its original nature? Here caution is needed in our reply and some distinctions have to be made.

First, Plato's "anthropology", properly speaking, is not to be found in the *Phaedo*, in which Socrates explains what he thinks to be the philosopher's attitude towards life, but rather in the second part of the *Timaeus.* Here after dealing with the origin of the cosmos, he turns to the origin of man and, from 42d onwards, is concerned with *concrete man as such.* He gives a penetrating analysis of the condition and the problems of the *synamphoteron* "Man", that is for Plato man-in-a-body.

Secondly, the moment a human being is born on earth is for him the moment an immortal human soul, created by the Demiurge, is united to a mortal human body which, as a living being, has its own kind of soul inherent in it. Plato describes that moment of birth as one which creates a highly difficult situation for the human being as a whole. For the higher

[15] It is particularly in the works of P. Althaus und E. Jüngel, that Plato's so-called dualism is illustrated by the death of Socrates, depicted as a glorious and joyful event. J. Ratzinger, *Eschatologie—Tod und ewiges Leben*, Regensburg 1977, 69-74, describes this view of Platonism and criticizes it judiciously.

[16] "Der platonische Sokrates, der seinen Tod als ein Fest begeht" (Ratzinger, *op. cit.* 69, rendering the interpretation of Althaus and Jüngel).

soul it is a situation very hard to cope with. It *has* to take the leading part, for the soul's natural task is "to take care of a body"[17], i.e. each particular rational soul of its own particular body. However, this task implies a tremendous struggle at the very outset, since the immortal soul is so closely united to the mortal body, that it is almost overwhelmed by the violent motions to which it is now exposed[18]. It is only after a certain time that the soul gradually recovers its equilibrium, so that the human being actually becomes rational[19].

Thirdly, this being so described, we cannot say that in Plato's view the moment "when the soul is bound in a body"[20] has the character of a fall. *It rather has the character of a challenge.* The soul has to cope with a very hard task, but this is neither unnatural nor unsound. It does not necessarily infringe the soul's spiritual character, though it *does* affect its concrete life. The soul's identity as "a being which has its origin and roots in an order beyond visible things" is untouched in its core, though the state of being bound in a body *does* touch it in so far as it has to undergo that continual hard struggle referred to in *Phaedo* 67e, a struggle for spiritual survival by dominating the lower psychic forces which, if kept under control, may help the higher soul in its ascent but, if not, may drag it down.

This is what we learn from the two-horse team simile in the *Phaedrus*[21]. It seems to me to pre-suppose a psychology no different from either that of the *Republic* with its very hard double training[22], both of the body and of the moral and intellectual faculties of man, or of the *Timaeus*, in which the double character of the right training of the human personality is equally stressed[23].

Does the *Phaedo*, after all, really presuppose a different psychology? I think the difference is a matter of words rather than of substance: in the *Phaedo* it is "the soul itself" and "by itself" which alone attains to knowledge of the truth, while in the *Republic* and the *Timaeus* it is the "higher part" of the soul[24] or its "most sovereign form in us"[25],

[17] The principle is expressed in its most general form in *Phaedr.* 246b, where it is used in a cosmological context; but it applies to the human condition as well.

[18] This is described in *Tim.* 43a-44b. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology* 147, refers to this passage as "an account of infant psychology (written) with an imaginative power that no other writers could equal".

[19] *Tim.* 44b-c.

[20] *Tim.* 44b1-2 (preceded by 43a5). Cf. *Phaedo* 81e1, 92a1.

[21] *Phaedr.* 248a-b.

[22] *Rep.* 535d.

[23] *Tim.* 87c-88c; cf. 89d-90a: the three parts of the soul must be equally trained.

[24] The *logistikon* of *Rep.* 439d *et al.*

[25] τὸ κυριώτατον παρ' ἡμῖν ψυχῆς εἶδος *Tim.* 90a, according to Cornford's translation. I think it could better be rendered by "most properly so called". It certainly means this in

elsewhere referred to as *noûs*[26] or as "the thinking part"[27]. This is the immortal or "divine part" in us, as this passage cited from the *Timaeus* says. In fact, we are not far from the *Phaedo* here.

On the other hand, in the *Phaedo* the desires were "the desires of the body", whereas since the *Republic*, or even since the *Gorgias*[28], they are a part of the soul, though its lower part. It should be remembered here that in the *Timaeus* which in its view of the *synamphoteron* stresses the unity of man as strongly as possible, the "lower part" of the soul has come into being together with the body, created not directly by the Demiurge himself, but made at his order by the "visible Gods". So again, in fact, we are not so far here from the view of the *Phaedo* whose mode of expression, moreover, does not differ from Socrates' speech in the *Apology* and *Crito*. The unity of man is always guaranteed by the principle of subordination of the "lower" to the "higher".

Lastly, the way in which Plato in the *Cratylus*, 400c, described the "tomb" (*sēma*) as a *peribolos*, which by keeping the soul firmly within its bonds, actually "saves" it by offering it the possibility of paying its penalty, does not appear to put a heavy mark of pessimism on Plato's view of human life. Just as he does in many other passages, he introduces here the Orphic view in a rather mythologizing form. That is to say, he refers to it, as it were, in quotation marks. Plato mentions that view always with respect, but also always with the marked detachment of a person who knows that he is speaking about things he does not know. Now this is precisely not what we call "dogmatizing".

By way of contrast it is interesting to note that we find quite a different approach in certain writings that stem from Plato's immediate environment, or at least pretend to do so. First, there is Aristotle's *Protrepticus* which was written in Plato's last years, within the Academy. "Which of us could call himself happy and blessed?", the author asks (fr. 10b Ross, *Frgm. Selecta* = B106-107 Düring) "which of us, all of whom are from the very first beginning (as they say in the Mysteries) shaped by nature as though for punishment? For it is an inspired saying of the ancients (θείως οἱ ἀρχαιότεροι λέγουσι) that the soul pays penalties and that we live for the punishment of great sins. For indeed, the conjunction of the soul with the body looks very much like this"[29]. He goes

Aristotle's definition of *ousia* at the beginning of ch. 5 of the *Categories* (2a11). For the connotation of "ruling" (κύριος) no superlative would be needed.

[26] As I pointed out in *Thēta-Pi* (1972), 21 (= above ch. 6, p. 175), the term νοῦς appears at least thrice in the *Timaeus* for indicating human thinking, which in that dialogue is mostly referred to by a periphrastic formula.

[27] *Tim.* 90d.

[28] Cf. the passage 493a-c with which we started.

[29] Düring's translation, Göteborg 1961.

on to illustrate this conjunction by the story of the Tyrrhenian pirates who tortured their captives by chaining dead bodies face to face with the living, fitting part to part. Now by this comparison he actually qualifies the state of man in a body as an unnatural, unsound and even disgusting state. Plato never said anything like this and apparently did not regard the human body in this way. He regarded it as an instrument that may serve us for our higher purposes, if only we keep it in good condition by training it and giving it due care.

The *Axiochus* was at an early date recognized as spurious. Burnet[30] took it as an Academic dialogue of the 3rd century B.C. However, there are serious grounds for dating it two centuries later, in the 1st century B.C.[31] The story is the following. Socrates is invited by Clinias to show his well-known wisdom by speaking a word to his father Axiochus who is struck by a sudden illness, and, finding himself near his end, has lost courage and is afraid of death. Socrates starts his exhortation to the old man by some rather Epicurean arguments, but then, from emphasizing the total insensibility of a dead body, passes on to the positive statement that "we" are *a soul*, that is, "an immortal living being shut in a mortal prison" (365e6: ζῷον ἀθάνατον ἐν θνητῷ κατειργμένον φρουρίῳ); "and nature fitted this tabernacle (τὸ σκῆνος τουτί) on us by misfortune (πρὸς κακοῦ)[32]. For its pleasures are superficial and fleeting, while its pains are long and without relief".

Here too we have a noticeable hardening of Plato's views, in particular in two respects: first, that "we" are *a soul*, a statement which was never made by Plato in this form[33], second, in that our condition of being bound in a body is said to result from a misfortune. This was certainly not what Plato said, nor does it render his evaluation of the "imprisonment" correctly. He saw in this rather a means of "salvation", that is, he understood the challenge of life in a positive sense, as a task given to man by a divine order, not at all as a misfortune, springing from evil.

It is interesting to note that, some six centuries after Plato, in a period which, on the whole, tended to a "dualist" or spiritualist view of man, Plotinus clearly took Plato's stand in his evaluation of the κάθοδος, des-

[30] In his Notes on the *Phaedo*, Oxford 1911; 7th reprint 1959, 62.

[31] The arguments are given by J. Souilhé, *Platon. Oeuvres Complètes*, Tome XIII.3 *Dialogues Apocryphes*, Paris 1930, 123-136.

[32] πρὸς κακοῦ does not mean "pour notre mal", as rendered by Souilhé. That would have been πρὸς κακόν.

[33] That man is "the soul" does not occur in any of Plato's authentic dialogues. It does occur in the *Alcibiades Maior* (130a-c), a dialogue which was much used in the Neoplatonist schools of late Antiquity. However, that it has to be rejected as inauthentic, was proved by conclusive arguments by E. de Strycker (see p. 229, n. 87 and p. 185).

cent, of the individual human soul to a particular human body: since he recognized it clearly as the soul's essential task to order and govern "that which comes after it"[34] he did not consider the κάθοδος as such "a fall" or a cause of evil[35]. How much Plotinus was conscious of the risks the soul runs of attaching itself too closely to its body and thus losing the indispensable contact with that which is above it, appears from the opening chapter of the treatise on the three basic hypostases (V.1): the soul that has forgotten God, its father, and does not remember whence it stems, is evidently "fallen". It has "lost its wings", and to it the body is actually a prison[36]. However, this is not *naturally* so, as an inevitable consequence of the κάθοδος. It is by its own fault that its present condition has come about: it *might* have kept due distance from its body. In that case it would not have been harmed in its essential being. But—even in its present state it *may* still return: "for none the less, it always keeps something of a higher order"[37].

All this, I think, brings out fairly clearly that those modern authors who write and speak as if the σῶμα-σῆμα formula were the most adequate expression of Plato's view of man and human life, can do so only by a certain misinterpretation of the function of that formula in Plato's thought[38]. For, in fact, Plato took human life much more as a challenge than as some kind of penance; and, when referring to the cave simile, one must never forget that this philosopher, who has sometimes been called an "educator", considered the essential task of education to be precisely the unbinding of the prisoners in the cave, making them turn round and dragging them up to the light of the real world.

Now, if we ask whether the ancient Christian authors did not have the same idea of Plato's estimation of man's condition in earthly life, we cannot reply in the affirmative. Justin is impressed by Plato's metaphysics of eternal being, and of a certain kinship of the soul to God, but there is nothing about the σῶμα-σῆμα formula in his account of Platonism. Clement of Alexandria does mention the formula, but refers

[34] *Enn.* IV.8, 3.21-31; IV.7, 13 (De Vogel, *Gr. Philos.* III.1375a,b).

[35] *Enn.* IV.8, 4.1-23, 28-35; cf. IV.8, 2.27-39; IV.8, 5.24-30.

[36] *Enn.* IV.8, 4.23 mentions both the πτερορρυῆσαι and the ἐν δεσμοῖς τοῖς τοῦ σώματος γενέσθαι.

[37] IV.8, 4.30-31; ἔχει γάρ τι ἀεὶ οὐδεν ἧττον ὑπερέχον τι. Cf. IV.7.13.9-13: even if a soul chooses to govern one particular body and for that purpose enters it, it has not become totally a part of that body, but "still keeps something outside". See the preceding chapter of this vol.

[38] I cannot say that this applies to Dr. E. Schroten in his dissertation (cited in note 1 above). Dr. Schroten is hostile to the prison "model", but in speaking about Plato he is highly cautious. I have the impression that G. J. de Vries acted as the "good genius" keeping him from errors in this matter.

to it as Pythagorean doctrine, even as a saying of Philolaus[39]. Gregory of Nyssa, often called the most Platonist of the Greek Fathers[40], speaks a great deal about the soul's upward journey in the chariot with the two-horseteam. This simile of the *Phaedrus* haunts his mind. For him it illustrates the rôle of the *pathē*, both of desires and of the element of courage in man, which can be made subservient to the thinking part, that is, the higher soul[41]. The prison simile is absent[42].

St. Augustine was strongly impressed by Plato's metaphysics, which reached him in the form of Neoplatonism. It formed his thought about God and about man. God is eternal Truth, and the higher soul of man partakes of that Truth, so that the Christian thinker can say: eternal Truth dwells in our mind. He calls it the *Magister interior* which can be consulted by us in our search for knowledge. In this form Platonism is constantly present in Augustine's mind, not only in such an early work as the *Soliloquia*, but in the *De libero arbitrio* and *De Magistro* as well. Nowhere does the prison simile appear to have taken such a prominent place as it has in a number of contemporary theological writers.

Before concluding let us have a look at that remarkable early Christian work "On the nature of man", which was written c.400 in Greek by the

[39] Clement, *Strom.* III.17 (= II.203. 11 Stählin).

[40] J. Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique*, Paris 1944, Introduction, emphasized the Christian character of the spiritual life of this 4th-century Cappadocian bishop so strongly that in his view only the language "looks" platonic, while the meaning of the words took an entirely different sense. However, Daniélou was wrong in that he thought Plato and Plotinus to have considered the body as such as evil, while Christians, such as Gregory of Nyssa, and even Origen, took a different stand, not regarding the body itself as evil, but its uncontrolled desires as a cause of sin. As a matter of fact, this was precisely what Plato and Plotinus held, whereas the doctrine that the body as such is evil, was a gnostic doctrine.

[41] Daniélou, *op. cit.*, 65-76. References are given there.

[42] It is not correct to state that Gregory imagined the human body to have been created only after "the Fall", explaining "the coat of skin" (δερμάτινοι χιτῶνες) of Genesis 3.21 as signifying the body. What Gregory does say in explaining Gen. 1.26-27 (*De opif. hom. PG* 44. 181a-d) is that the words "God made man in His image" refer to the spiritual man, not to the human body. The words "He made them male and female" cannot be referred to the image of God, since God is incorporeal and immutable (ἄτρεπτος), while man's created nature is always changing (184c). That man was made in God's image, means that he shared all God's virtue and wisdom, including freedom. This gift, however, was misused by man (184d). God then, foreseeing that this would happen, super-added the difference of male and female to the original image (185a), a difference which was not in the exemplary man (τὸ πρωτότυπον) Jesus Christ (cf. Gal. 3.28).

To this Daniélou, *Platonisme et Théologie mystique*, 54, remarked that, in contrast to Western theology, it was not the "supernatural" that was regarded by Gregory to be *superadditum* to the "nature" of man; but to the nature of man, animal life (the ζῷον, in Plotinus' language) was added. Daniélou remarks that, in this, Eastern Christian theology has a view of human nature which is exactly the opposite of that of Western theology. He does not say that the "Eastern" view is simply Plotinian. Which, none the less, is an interesting fact.

bishop Nemesius, of Emesa in Syria. The opening chapter offers some highly interesting perspectives. We leave the problems about the trichotomy of man—not body and soul, but body, soul and *noûs*—which, in fact, refers back to Aristotle, but by Nemesius is attributed to "some people", among whom he mentions Plotinus. It would not be too difficult to explain that here Nemesius misunderstood Plotinus. But, leaving that on one side[43], we turn to his account of Plato's anthropology, recalling that in the second part of the *Timaeus* Plato is constantly concerned with the problems of *concrete man*, which means, the problems of a human soul in a human body. That is the *synamphoteron*, the both-of-them-together. Nemesius says: "Plato seems not to mean that man is the both-together, soul and body, but a soul that makes use of such-and-such a body".

This is somewhat surprising. For here Nemesius uses the *Alcibiades Maior*, 130a-c, and seems to neglect completely Plato's real, and most elaborate, anthropology given in the *Timaeus*. This at least is as it might seem. Did he, however, really neglect it, or did he rather *understand* Plato's doctrine of the human composite this way? I think one could hardly deny that Plato spoke of man as a "both-together". The term *synamphoteron* was, after all, used in the *Phaedo* as well. But whether or not Nemesius had ever seen the second part of the *Timaeus*, we should not translate οὐ δοκεῖ λέγειν by "Plato does not seem *to say* that man is the compound", but rather by "Plato does not seem to *mean* that man is the compound". Nemesius gives an *interpretation* of Plato's anthropology: even granting that he spoke of "both-together", he *meant* that the soul is the leading part. The unity of man is guaranteed by the subordination of the body with regard to the soul.

As a matter of fact, this unity was better explained by Plato in the *Timaeus* than by the instrumentalist formula of the *Alcibiades*. After all, the unity of the human compound is an organic unity, and this is what Plato brings out in the *Timaeus* in quite an elaborate way. It is true that Nemesius in his further account emphasized the unity of man very strongly, and noticed in particular the organic interpretation of the two heterogeneous parts. The unity of the creature is rooted in the unity of the Creator. In fact, the Christian view here touches closely on Plato's in the *Timaeus*. Nemesius was less fortunate when starting from the *Alcibiades*. But anyhow, the prison view does not play any rôle in his anthropology.

With contemporary theologians it does. At the end of our inquiry I think we have some grounds to ask, whether they are so fortunately in-

[43] For this cf. my preceding chapter.

spired when they oppose "the body as a prison" to "the body as a temple", suggesting that this contrast is characteristic of the "Greek" and the "Christian" view of man respectively.

I venture to reply as follows:

If a temple is a place where to serve and honour God; if it was Plato's firm conviction that his task in earthly life lay in serving his fellow-men by morally and spiritually guiding them, and this in strict obedience to God; if, on the whole, in Plato's view man's task in life consists of fighting a battle against evil, and this in serving and honouring God; then the temple simile can hardly have been alien to his mind. We rather get the impression that the opposition of the temple view to the prison view is more or less forced and unplatonic. For the prison idea itself stems from the moral and religious sphere of expiating sins, which for Plato no doubt was a way to serve and honour God; so that, after all, the prison and the temple were for him at least not that far from each other.

But, with due reservations, something more must be said. For, if the "biblical" view of man and human life is opposed to that which in certain circles to-day is generally labelled either "Greek" or "Platonic", it is *the indwelling of the Holy Ghost* in the Christian which is opposed to the prison view. Now, certainly, we have to remember that Plato was not a Christian. In making this statement we do not forget that his profound belief in a transcendent Reality, which he knew to be the divine and ultimate ground of everything existing, including ourselves, brings him singularly close to Christian believers. None the less, we repeat, Plato was not a Christian, and the higher thinking mind of man, which he called *noûs*, cannot be identified with the Holy Spirit of God. Thus, it would be too easy just to say that for Plato too, *a divine spirit given to man by God, was indwelling in man*, and that man's most proper life-task was to honour and cultivate that divine spirit that dwells within himself. Yet, it must be noted, the above-given quotation was literally what Plato said. It can be read in these very words in the *Timaeus*, 90a-d. He refers to the higher thinking faculty of man as a (good) genius, given to each of us by God. And if we honour and cultivate that genius well, we shall be "blessed". He says: "*eu-daimones*", i.e. having a good genius within us. I am not inclined to quote this as a parallel to 1 Cor. 3.16 or 1 Cor. 6.19, but it is perfectly right to remember John 1.9.

On the other hand, if one speaks of "the biblical view of man and the human condition", as far as the Old Testament is concerned, we ask: Is one sufficiently aware of the fact that, historically speaking, it is impossible to refer to "*the* O.T. view" as a static unity, which could be opposed to a "Greek" view which, on the whole, is conceived as another

unity[44]? As a matter of fact, neither of them was a static unity. The O.T. includes a text such as Wisdom 9.15, which reads in the Vulgate: *Corpus enim quod corrumpitur adgravat animam, et deprimit terrena inhabitatio sensum multa cogitantem.* It will not do to dismiss that text by labelling it "Hellenistic-Greek". No doubt it stems from the Jewish world, certainly in the Hellenistic period, but it is Jewish none the less. As for the New Testament, it cannot be denied that the Apostle Paul, who "delighted in the law of God after the inward man", but found a different law "in his members", a law that was, as he says, "fighting against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members", (Rom. 7.23), who exclaims "who shall deliver me of the body of this death?", knew something of that "perpetual quarrel with the body" which the philosopher Socrates mentioned on the eve of his death. It cannot be denied that the man who wrote Rom. 8.21-23, *did* feel the body as a kind of prison and was looking forward to the end of earthly life as to a *redemption* which would bring him to a closer union with his Lord (cf. Phil. 1.23-24)[45].

Whatever theologians, fed on modern anthropology, may say, this much is clear, that such texts of Paul and that from the Book of Wisdom, which was frequently quoted by Christian authors of the early centuries, *i.a.* Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, and by Augustine the Platonist, give an eloquent testimony to the fact that for those comparatively early Christians, who were so keenly aware of the essential difference between philosophy and Christian faith, the prison "model" of understanding human life existed side by side with the temple "model", and this because both the prison *experience* and the temple experience were real things in their life.

[44] Cf. Ratzinger in *Eschatologie*, 71 (cf. n. 15).
[45] Cf. my "Reflections on Philipp. i 23-24", *Novum Testamentum* 19 (1977), 262-274.

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Who was Plato the philosopher? This is the connecting theme of the reflections presented in this, the last work of the author, a veteran in Plato studies, whose long list of publications on Greek philosophy and its sequel began in 1936 with her detailed study on the place of the *Parmenides* in Plato's thought. Having spent a lifetime in this field, the author here offers more of her thoughts on 'the written and unwritten doctrines', on the character of Plato as a metaphysical thinker, and on Platonism and Christianity.

Chapters 1-5 contain the author's exchanges with the leading scholars of the period 1930-1980, ending in 1984. A section entitled 'The doctrines' provides the reader with an essential foundation: the problem of knowledge and reality, man as a *synamphoteron*, the First Principles, and Plato's physics. The whole of the author's interpretation of Plato, expounded in her earlier works, is here summarized, revised and supplemented, with particular emphasis on anthropology.

It was the author's hope that better insight will result from her reflections.

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